

# Mobilising Students & Their Households to **Get Vaccinated**



STATE CAPABILITY  
ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

# Outline for the Session

- 1. The COVID-19 situation in Meghalaya and the need for vaccination*
- 2. How does the COVID-19 vaccine work?*
- 3. Common vaccine-related questions and myths*
- 4. How to get trustworthy information on the vaccine?*
- 5. Activity for Students!*

# **1. The Need for Vaccination**

# There are 2 things everyone should know about the COVID-19 pandemic in Meghalaya

1

The actual spread of the virus is much higher than what is reported. And there are multiple ways in which COVID can get transmitted.

*This means we are all at high risk of being infected by Covid-19*

2

The spread of the virus can be controlled through simple steps - but these require everyone's cooperation

*This means that there is hope and if we work together, we can beat Covid-19*

# How Does **Vaccination** Help Address These Issues?

1

The actual spread of the virus is much higher than what is reported. And there are multiple ways in which COVID can get transmitted



When WE ALL get vaccinated, we greatly reduce the risk of both contracting & spreading the virus. This means that we are 1 step closer to becoming immune to the infectious disease.

2

The spread of the virus can be controlled through simple steps - but these require everyone's cooperation



If WE ALL get vaccinated, we can achieve herd immunity, a way to protect ourselves from the virus.

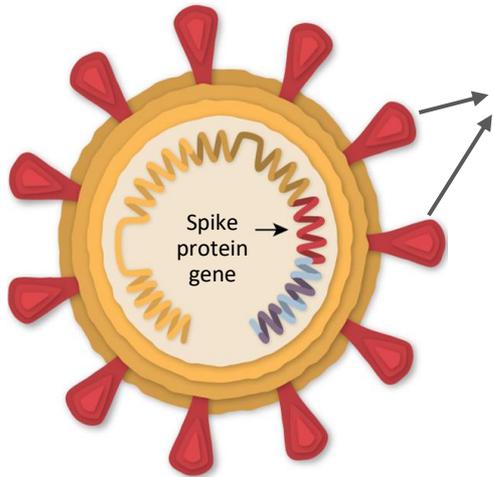
**We have a moral duty to get vaccinated for our community & our loved ones.**

*If we are not all vaccinated, there is a higher possibility that new variants of the virus might emerge that infect and kill more people.*

## **2. How does the COVID vaccine work?**

1

## CORONAVIRUS

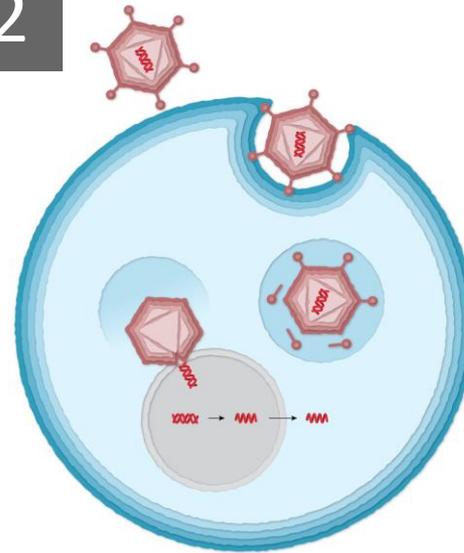


### Spikes

The virus uses spikes to enter the cells in our body.

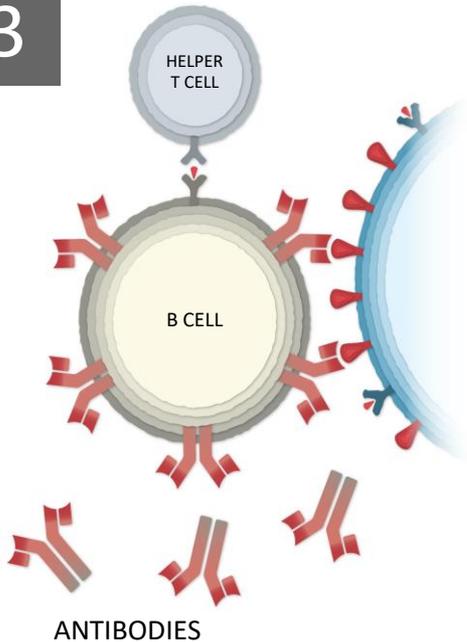
Scientists use this shape to create vaccines, which look like the virus.

2



**The Vaccine** enter our cells and trains our body on how to recognize and fight coronavirus.

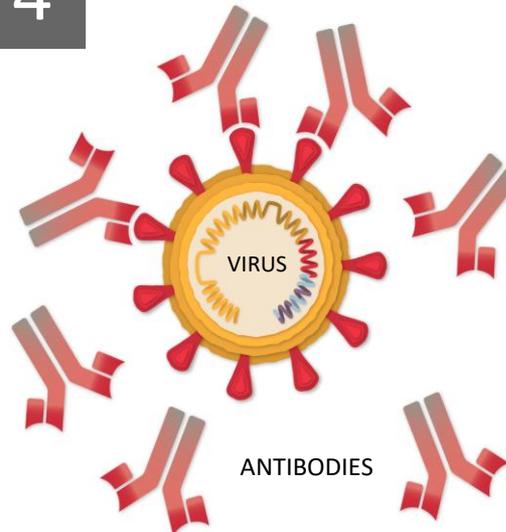
3



### Antibodies

Through the vaccine, we develop antibodies that can target the spikes in the virus

4



### Immunity

Now if the virus enters our body then the antibodies are able to identify and stop it

### **3. Common vaccine-related questions and myths**

# Are COVID-19 Vaccines Safe & Effective?

Just like any other vaccine, such as Polio Vaccine, COVID-19 Vaccines went through all pre-clinical & clinical trials to assess their safety

COVID-19 Vaccines are also safe for people with conditions such as high blood pressure, diabetes and asthma

**83 crore**

Number of people who have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine ***across the world.***

**5.8 crore**

Number of people who have received both doses of the COVID-19 vaccine ***in India***

*By tracking all the people who have been vaccinated, we know that the COVID-19 vaccine is **very safe***

*True as on June 30, 2021*

*Data Sources: Our World In Data; Ministry of Health & Family Welfare*

# Will the side-effects of the vaccine be damaging in the long-term?

The vaccine is designed to look like the real disease so that your body will recognize and fight COVID-19.

Side-effects, such as fever, are a sign that your immune system is fighting the vaccine. It means your immune system is working.

- Common side-effects include fever, injection site pain, fatigue or nausea.
- Side-effects usually last one or two days after getting the vaccine. There are no long-lasting side-effects of the vaccine.
- You can take a paracetamol at home to manage these side-effects
- If you worry about side-effects, you should be more worried about the long-lasting side-effects and risk of death that you face from COVID-19 which include difficulty breathing, fever, concentration problems, depression, and more.

## What does getting COVID can feel like?

- Weeks with fever and other symptoms like cough, headache and diarrhea
- In severe cases, feeling like you are drowning and gasping for breath
- Psychological stress of extended periods of isolation
- Fear of infecting your loved ones and other around you

## What does getting vaccine can feel like?

- Sense of personal safety now that you have given yourself a much better chance to fight COVID
- Sense of empowerment from knowing that you are protecting your loved ones and other around you
- One or two days with fever or body aches in very few cases

# Will the COVID-19 Vaccine reduce my chances of having a baby?

COVID-19 vaccine **DOES NOT** affect fertility or ability to get pregnant in the future

## *How do we know that COVID-19 vaccine does not affect fertility?*

- The vaccine is just training your body to fight the virus.
- The vaccine does not interact with the reproductive system.
- Many women in Meghalaya, India and across the world have become pregnant after receiving the COVID-19 vaccine

**As per new GOI guidelines, breast-feeding mothers are now eligible for the Covid-19 vaccine. *Lactating women can safely continue to feed their babies before and after vaccination.***

# Common Vaccination Myths

## **Myth 1: Since you can still get COVID-19 after vaccination, vaccines don't work**

**Fact:** The vaccine does not eliminate the chance of catching COVID-19, but it is *very effective* in reducing the risk of infection. In case you are infected, the vaccine is also proven to prevent death or severe illness.

## **Myth 2: Don't get vaccinated during your periods**

**Fact:** It is **completely safe to get vaccinated during your periods.**

## **Myth 3: After I get a vaccine, I no longer need to wear a mask**

**Fact:** You can still get COVID-19 after vaccination and you can still infect someone else. Therefore, **you must still wear a mask** and take other protective measures.

## **Myth 4: The vaccine was tested & introduced too quickly**

**Fact:** Vaccine development involves a series of steps that often take a long time. For Covid-19, scientists & regulators worked together to fast track the process and avoid bureaucratic delays. **They did not compromise on safety.**

## **Myth 5: I have had 1 dose of the vaccine, and I do not need the 2nd dose.**

**Fact:** Currently, vaccines in India **require 2 doses to offer full protection.** The 1st dose starts the process of producing antibodies and building protection, the second dose reinforces that protection.

**4. How to get trustworthy  
information on the vaccine?**

# Watch Out for Social Media Myths

## MISLEADING

**Myth:** Eating garlic can help prevent infection from Covid-19.

**Fact:** There is no evidence suggesting such antibiotic properties of garlic

## DANGEROUS

**Myth:** Wearing a mask will increase the amount of carbon dioxide I breathe and will make me sick..

**Fact:** Not wearing a mask makes you highly susceptible to Covid-19, which can kill you

## USES FEAR TO TRICK PEOPLE

**Myth:** Covid-19 vaccine can make you infertile.

**Fact:** Vaccine does not affect fertility at all. Many women in Meghalaya have become pregnant after taking the vaccine.

## Protect Yourself from Fake News

- **CHECK THE SOURCE:** Beware of vague, untraceable sources. ‘**A doctor friend of a friend**’ or ‘**Scientists say..**’ without further details.
- **ARE OTHER SOURCES SAYING THE SAME THING?** Check to see if other newspapers/ news channels/ trusted sources are saying the same thing

# Sources to Get Information

## Good Sources

### **NHM Meghalaya**

- [www.nhmmeghalaya.nic.in](http://www.nhmmeghalaya.nic.in)
- NHM Meghalaya Facebook Page
- NHM Meghalaya Instagram
- NHM Meghalaya Youtube Channel

### **World Health Organization**

- [www.who.in](http://www.who.in)
- WHO Facebook Page
- WHO Instagram

### **Meghalaya Covid-19 Response Team**

- Facebook
- Instagram

## Bad Sources



### **WhatsApp**

- Forwards by family or friends
- Messages from unknown numbers
- Information from unverified sources shared in groups



### **Facebook and Instagram pages of unofficial sources**

## **4. Activity for Students!**

# How to talk to your parents or family members about getting vaccinated?

1

## Ask Open-Ended Questions to Understand Their Concerns

Ask questions like, '*What about the vaccine concerns you?*', '*What are your thoughts on the safety & usefulness of the vaccine?*' to understand what they are worried about and where they learned any problematic information.

Acknowledge their worries and try to respond with facts from sources that they trust like the local family doctor, village headman or religious leader.

2

## Share Information From Sources They Might Trust

Acknowledge their worries and try to respond with facts & information from sources that they trust like the *local family doctor, village headman or religious leader or trusted neighbour*.

3

## Help Them Find Their Reason to Get Vaccinated

Direct the conversation from 'why not' to why. *Everyone has their own reasons to get vaccinated, whether that be to protect themselves & their loved ones, or to return to a life of normalcy.* Remind them that sooner we all get vaccinated, the sooner we return to a normal life.

4

## Help Them Through the Process of Getting Vaccinated

Help them fulfill their commitment by the making the process easy & stress-free. This could mean *helping in the registration process, securing transportation or offering to look after the home while they go out to get vaccinated.*

# Two Activities

## Activity

1

Find 3 household member in the 18+ age group who has **not taken the Covid-19 vaccine.** Understand their reasons, and try to convince them by asking the following question, '***What about the vaccine concerns you?***

*If possible, ask for the person's consent & document your conversation/answers on a sheet of paper to share with your teacher.*

## Activity

2

Find 3 household member/community member in the 18+ age group **who has taken the Covid-19 vaccine.** Understand their reasons, by asking the following question, '***What made you take the vaccine?***

*If possible, ask for the person's consent & document your conversation/answers on a sheet of paper to share with your teacher.*