

# COVID Impacts

## PERCEPTIONS OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE AMONG CANADIANS, USA CITIZENS AND MEXICANS

The Association for Canadian Studies and Leger Marketing have undertaken bi-weekly tracking around vaccine hesitation in Canada, the USA and Mexico. Sample sizes of 2759 (Canada), 3277 (the USA) and 1507 (Mexico) examined public willingness to take an approved vaccine and the degree of fear associated. The negative impact of COVID-19 in these countries cannot be underestimated. Therefore, it is essential that the majority of the population supports the vaccination program and, more importantly, get vaccinated.

### COVID-19 VACCINES

Currently, in clinical trials, COVID vaccines have received approval by independent regulatory boards after following rigorous guidelines to ensure public safety and testing. To date, the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines have received approval in North America, showing more than 90% effectiveness in preventing symptomatic COVID-19 infection (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).

#### WHAT WE KNOW

- In Canada, men (58.4%) are more likely to take the COVID-19 vaccines compared to women (49.4%). The same responses are seen in both the USA and Mexico, with men (54.3% and 75.9% respectively) more likely to take the COVID-19 vaccines compared to women.
- In Canada, the USA and Mexico, older people are less hesitant to take the COVID-19 vaccines than youth.
- In Canada, 62.2% of those very afraid of personally catching COVID-19 intend to get vaccinated against COVID-19 when it becomes available to the population. While in the USA, 55.6% of those who are very afraid of COVID-19 intend to get vaccinated. Meanwhile, 82.9% of Mexicans who are very afraid of COVID-19 intend to be vaccinated against COVID-19 when it is available.
- 71.2% of Mexicans who travel to work intend to take the COVID-19 vaccines when available to the population, with more hesitation in Canada (52.1%) and the USA (43.8%).
- For those worried about children going back to school at this time, 76.0% of Mexicans who answered 'worried' intend to take the COVID-19 vaccines when it becomes available to the public while 57.8% in Canada and 50.8% in the USA intend of getting vaccinated.
- Among the various ethnic groups, vaccine hesitation is highest amongst the Black population in Canada and the United States. Vaccine hesitancy is also high among Indigenous peoples in both countries.
- Overall, vaccine hesitation is lowest amongst Mexicans<sup>1</sup> (72.1%), then Canadians (53.2%) and lastly the USA (44.1%).

## ARE VACCINES SAFE?

According to the World Health Organization (2020) vaccination is an effective way of protecting people against the spread of harmful diseases before they come into contact with them by using the body's natural defenses to build resistance to specific infections and reduce disease severity when infected.

Based on reports from medical sources, the COVID-19 vaccines will not result in future genetic changes in the vaccinated person (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). The mRNA vaccines teach a person's cells to make a protein that will trigger an immune response without using the live virus that causes COVID-19 (Government of Canada, 2021a). Importantly, there is no virus in the mRNA vaccines, which means you cannot get COVID-19 from the vaccine.

## SIDE EFFECTS OF THE COVID-19 VACCINE

Very mild or moderate side effects such as tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever are known to be possible with the COVID-19 vaccines. There can also be swelling and redness in the arm area where the vaccine was given, nausea, enlarged lymph nodes and generally feeling unwell (Canada, 2021b). Serious side effects in Canada are extremely rare, as only 0.003% of all vaccinations have resulted in serious side effects and no deaths have been reported.

## REFERENCES

[CDC \(2020\). Understanding mRNA Vaccines.](#)

[Government of Canada \(2020\). COVID-19 vaccine safety in Canada.](#)

[Government of Canada \(2021\). Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine: What you should know.](#)

[World Health Organization \(2020\). Vaccines and immunization: What is vaccination?](#)

## ABOUT THE PROJECT

The researchers: A cross-national team of over 30 researchers led by Dr. Lori Wilkinson, Dr. Kiera Ladner and Dr. Jack Jedwab, received funding from CIHR for this study *COVID-19's differential impact on the mental and emotional health of Indigenous Peoples and Newcomers: A socioeconomic analysis of Canada, US and Mexico*.

The study: The team has been collecting data in Canada since March 9 and the United States since March 27, 2020. Ongoing survey waves now include Mexico. Our goal is to measure and follow the changes in attitudes, behaviours, health and socioeconomic outcomes among persons living in all three countries using a mixed methodology of surveys and unstructured interviews.

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