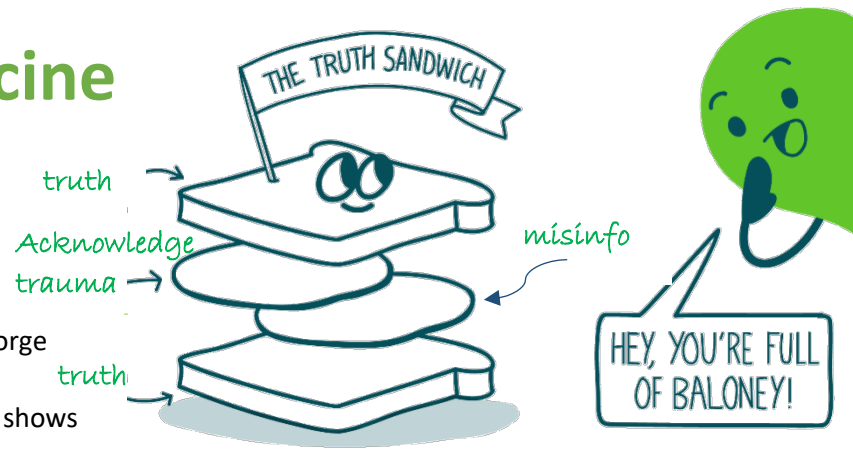


Responding to Vaccine Misinformation & Questions



Some call it a truth sandwich as described by George Lakoff; others simply refer to it as correcting misinformation. Whatever you call it the science shows the best approach is:

1. **Start with the truth.** The first frame gets the advantage.
2. **Address trauma** as it's being expressed (*this is our addition to Lakoff's model*)
3. **Indicate the misinformation.** Avoid amplifying the specific language if possible. You'll notice in the examples below that the misinformation is often buried midsentence.
4. **Return to the truth.** Always repeat truths more than the wrong information.

T = Truth

M = Misinfo

AT = Acknowledge Trauma

Can the vaccines give me COVID-19?

T: None of the COVID-19 vaccines currently used or in development in the United States (**M**) contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. **T:** This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

Will the vaccine affect my DNA?

T: The vaccines work to teach your cells to attack the virus. **AT:** some of these new vaccine techniques may seem scary, but (**M**) the vaccines do not affect or interact with our DNA in any way. **T:** The mRNA never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA (genetic material) is kept.

Can I still get COVID-19 after I get the vaccine??

T: While current vaccines are shown to be highly effective in preventing people from getting sick from the virus, (**M**) you **can** still get COVID-19 and be sick even if you get the vaccine. **T:** The vaccines are very effective in reducing the severity of the COVID-19 illness.

Does my friend's immigration status mean they can't get the vaccination?

T: San Francisco is a sanctuary city, people can safely get health care through the city system. **AT:** We know that it feels vulnerable, (**M**) but your information won't be shared. **T:** We want everyone to be vaccinated safely.

I heard a rumor about a microchip-is there anything to that?

T: The vaccines are safe and only medicines. **AT:** We know many people have questions about the vaccine and (**M**) misinformation has been spread about the vaccine like this one. **T:** The vaccine is safe and millions of people around the world have already gotten it.

Responding to Vaccine Misinformation

How were the vaccines developed so quickly? Are COVID-19 vaccines safe?

T: COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective; millions of people in the US have already received COVID-19 vaccines. Although COVID-19 is new, medical experts have been working on vaccines to the coronavirus family of viruses for years **AT:** Researchers, such as Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett, an African-American scientist who worked on one of the first COVID-19 vaccines, have helped develop vaccines with the goal to ensure that safe vaccines advance equity. **(M)** There were no serious safety concerns in the trials. **T:** Before being authorized for use, all COVID-19 vaccines were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people to make sure they met safety standards and protected adults of different ages, races, and ethnicities. And, CDC and the FDA continue to monitor the vaccines to make sure they are safe.

Is it mandatory to get the vaccine?

T: It is your choice if you want to take the vaccine. **AT:** A lot of false information raises justified concerns, but **(M)** there is no mandatory vaccination requirement from the state or federal government. **T:** The vaccine is safe and an important tool to end the pandemic. It's your choice to get the vaccine once it's available to you.

If I have allergies, can I get the vaccine?

T: CDC recommends that most people can safely get the vaccine. Even those with a **(M)** history of severe allergic reactions unrelated to vaccines —like food, pet, venom, environmental, or latex allergies—get vaccinated. **T:** If you have had a severe allergic reaction to any ingredient in an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, you shouldn't get either of the mRNA COVID-19 vaccines. If you had a severe allergic reaction after getting the first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine, CDC recommends that you don't get the second dose.

Can pregnant individuals get the vaccine?

T: Yes. If a person is pregnant it is a good idea to get the vaccine, because pregnant individuals have a higher risk for complications from COVID-19 disease. There are no study results available yet on the safety of COVID-19 vaccines in pregnant individuals. However, experts believe that the vaccines are unlikely **(M)** to pose a risk to the individual or the fetus. **T:** Pregnant individuals can talk with a healthcare provider about their risk of COVID-19 disease and how they might benefit from vaccination.

Can you get COVID-19 from the vaccine? What are the side-effects?

T: The vaccines are safe and it is normal for **(M)** vaccines to cause symptoms in some people, those effects are a sign that the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19. For most people, these symptoms will last no longer than 1–3 days. **(M)** They do NOT mean you have COVID-19, because you can't get COVID-19 from the vaccine. **T:** To reduce pain and discomfort where you get the vaccination: Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the area, and use or exercise your arm. To reduce symptoms, talk to your health care provider about taking an over-the-counter medication such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen.

Are there serious long-term side effects from COVID-19 vaccine?

T: The vaccines have been tested very thoroughly and millions of people have already gotten the vaccine. **(M)** Very rarely do vaccines have long term side effects. **T:** CDC and the FDA will keep closely monitoring the vaccines to look for safety issues after they are authorized and in use.