



## **A Letter to Those Who Are Hesitant About the Covid19 Vaccine**

**By Ryan Barbin**

***Are you curious, concerned or hesitant about receiving the Covid19 vaccine?*** I hear you. I am writing this, not to tell you that you are wrong for being hesitant or even resistant to receiving the vaccine. I'm not going to try to persuade you, judge you, or even tell you that you should receive the vaccine. In fact, I'm going to do the exact opposite. I'm writing this to tell you that you are right to question. Your concern or hesitancy is completely normal, honest, understandable and in many ways respectable. I am writing this letter to let you know that you are not alone. There are many reasons why a person such as yourself might feel concern, fear, doubt, uncertainty or even opposed to being vaccinated. Whether it be religious or cultural beliefs, political views, distrust, fear, skepticism or any other reason that is concerning or important enough to you to cause hesitancy, there is no person that can tell you that you are wrong for feeling the way you do. You are human and humans feel things. I applaud your conscious human thoughts, emotions and actions. Congratulations, you are not a robot.

Now, what I would like to encourage you to do, is to educate and discover for yourself before deciding to get the vaccine. Hesitancy is normal and correct, but knowledge is power, and your health is your wealth. Your health and well-being and that of those you love and care about is not something to risk based on hearsay. So, take an active role in understanding the decision that lies before you. No one should force you to do something you are unsure of. But, if you are unsure, perhaps you should find your own assuredness. Scientists, Pharmacists, Politicians, Doctors, etc. are all very knowledgeable and have a lot of information that you may not know. However, it is your life, your body, and ultimately your decision to make. And with the US death toll from Covid now over 500,000, I think it's safe to say the decision is an important one to make. So, before you refuse or become committed to your hesitancy against the vaccine, at least commit to educating yourself on the reasons why you choose to be so.

If this seems like a lot to consider and take in, I assure you that it is not as difficult as it seems. In fact, I will suggest some simple, self-discovery options that you can easily do to assist in making an educated decision for yourself before deciding to get vaccinated.

- 1.) Talk to medical professionals that you know and trust.** We've all seen Dr. Fauci and a slew of other medical professionals discussing numbers and details about the virus and the vaccines. However, you can tell me there is a shark in the water, but until I've seen a fin with my own eyes or met and spoke to a person who lost a leg to a shark attack, I might still consider going swimming. So, talk with your doctors or with a friend or family member in the medical field whom you know and trust. Educated medical professionals have invaluable information that can help you make a decision, and if that professional is someone you know and trust, it will help ease your concerns.
- 2.) Talk to someone who is considered "high risk" or someone who has had the virus.** Perhaps you are young, healthy and unconcerned about the virus due to the risk to you is low. However, if you have a friend, neighbor, family member or loved one with diabetes or some underlying medical condition, or a grandparent who is up in age and therefore they are considered "high risk". Talk to them. Ask how they feel about getting the vaccine or whether they are concerned about the virus. If you are not worried about yourself catching Covid, maybe considering how they feel may help you make a well-informed decision. If perhaps you know someone who has or had the virus, talk to them about their experience and consider them when making the decision to receive the vaccine.
- 3.) Talk to someone who has already received the vaccine.** Perhaps you don't know anyone personally who has tested positive for Covid, or that has an underlying medical condition, but you may know someone who has already received the vaccine. Talk to them about their experience with getting the vaccine. Ask about the process they went through to get vaccinated. Ask about any side effects they may have experienced after receiving the vaccine. Understanding what others experienced may help to ease your worries or concerns.
- 4.) Have faith.** Keep in mind that the virus and the vaccine is new to all of us. And though there is still a lot of unavoidable uncertainty regarding both, we are learning more every single day. Also, keep in mind that this is not the first pandemic we have faced in society. Over the years we have fought a plethora of viruses and epidemics including SARS, Swine Flu, Ebola, even the Black Plague. All of which were new, scary, uncertain and yet we learned and developed vaccines and cures and together we defeated these uncertain threats through educated medical advancements and practices. This is no different, and with a little faith and the right treatments we can defeat this virus as well.

So, before you put up your walls of resistance or distrust against the vaccines, take a little time and do a little self-discovery and consideration for the medical advances that are being made and for the threat that presents itself. Do it for your own health and for those you know, love and trust. You don't have to have all the facts and all the figures to make an educated and informed decision. You only have to remain open-minded, willing to understand, and wanting

to see all of us overcome this together and stop the spread before we have to lose more of those we love. The decision to get vaccinated is a decision for you alone to make. Just make sure you take the time to care enough to be informed, educated and considerate in whatever you decide. The decision is yours alone. But we are all in this together.