

The SQUINTSTAGRAM™

Fighting COVID-19 Misinformation



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SQUINT is receiving reports of misinformation regarding Johnson and Johnson (J&J) COVID-19 vaccine. In



particular, the misinformation is stating that the J&J vaccine is less safe than the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines and is being targeted towards underserved communities, such as Black and Hispanic populations.

Many sources note that the testing environments differed substantially between the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines versus the J&J vaccine as the J&J vaccine was tested later in 2020 and included South Africa and the COVID B.1.351 variant. Also, when judged by how the J&J vaccine prevents severe disease, hospitalization, and death, the J&J vaccine is comparable to the Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech vaccines.

With the vaccine hesitancy in the United States, it is important to fight against misinformation about the vaccines and false narratives that might prevent citizens from receiving any of the three COVID-19 vaccines available in the United States.

Per Jay Schnitzer, M.D., Ph.D., Chief Technology Officer and Chief Medical Officer at MITRE, "All three of the vaccines that have received US FDA Emergency Use Authorization have ample evidence from robust prospective randomized control clinical trials that they are safe and effective. Although there are some differences among the three, for the characteristics that matter most - safety and efficacy in preventing severe disease and death - there are no measurable differences. The best vaccine for any of us is the one we are offered first."

Public health communicators should convey the following messages when taking steps to combat misinformation about the J&J Vaccine:

- Emphasize that all three vaccines (J&J, Moderna, and Pfizer-BioNTech) are highly effective at preventing cases of COVID-19
- Explain that all vaccines are free and were made for everyone, regardless of insurance status, immigration status, or employment status

- Acknowledge historical injustices and emphasize that protections have been put in place to protect minority communities
- Encourage people to get the vaccine when one becomes available to them and emphasize that more people who can get the vaccine, the safer their communities will be

Join the Fight Against COVID-19 Misinformation
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