

COVID-19 ANSWERING THE MYTHS

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Last updated 5th January 2021

MYTH: GPs are making a lot of money from COVID vaccinations



TRUTH: GPs are paid £12.50 per injection. Most won't make a profit. Some may make a loss.

This includes paying for:

- GP work (8am - 8pm up to 7 days a week)
- Venues (e.g. hall/library) & equipment
- Admin & nursing staff
- Training staff & educating patients
- Monitoring patients after their vaccination



BRITISH ISLAMIC
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MYTH: COVID is no more dangerous than the flu



TRUTH: COVID kills up to 10x more than flu.

Research at John Hopkins University indicates that COVID is more fatal, impacts more people for longer (up to 30 days) and spreads faster than the flu.

Claiming that COVID is no more dangerous than the flu trivialises the destruction this virus has brought to many lives.



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MYTH: COVID vaccine causes irreversible side effects



TRUTH: No patient has so far suffered from irreversible side effects - in trials or in the population.

This myth was spread by misreading a presentation which actually said 3000 of those vaccinated suffered with temporary and reversible side effects.

All medicines have the potential to cause side effects, but this needs to be weighed up against the harm of the disease they are trying to prevent.



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MYTH: COVID is caused by the 5G network



TRUTH: COVID is spreading in countries without 5G. There is no scientific connection.

This myth started as the COVID outbreak coincided with 5G being rolled out in Wuhan. It ignores the fact that 5G had been started in other areas of China before the COVID outbreak.

COVID has also affected countries that do not have 5G.



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MYTH: COVID deaths are being exaggerated



TRUTH: COVID deaths are most likely under-reported rather than exaggerated.

The majority of COVID declared deaths have positive swabs. A minority are recorded as COVID without a swab if the radiological picture or symptoms strongly suggest COVID in the absence of any other explanation and doing a post-death swab is undesirable / impractical.

This is in keeping with normal medical practice.



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MYTH: Doctors want to force people to be vaccinated



TRUTH: We want people to make their own minds up based on factual information, not myths.

Most countries will rely on education rather than dictation to convince the population.

However, it would be irresponsible of us not to highlight areas where we feel people are being misled - sometimes deliberately and dangerously.



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MYTH: The COVID vaccine ingredients are Haram



TRUTH: The Pfizer-Biontech vaccine contains no animal ingredients at all.

Declaring a product Halal or Haram is a call for Islamic scholars who have studied on this for years. The simple presence of a particular ingredient is not the only factor taken into account.

Most previous vaccines, including the Pfizer-Biontech vaccine, have been declared halal by the majority of scholarly bodies worldwide.



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MYTH: Vaccines contain aborted foetal cells



TRUTH: Vaccines do not contain foetal cells.

Some vaccines (NOT the Pfizer / Moderna COVID vaccines) originally used very special foetal cells to grow the virus many decades ago.

The original cells were the only option at the time. These cells are are not present in current vaccines and have been declared acceptable to use by the majority of Islamic scholarly bodies worldwide.



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MYTH: Vaccines are being used to chip and track the population



TRUTH: Vaccines do not contain any chips or trackers for surveillance.

Independent authorities across the world from countries that compete with each other have approved the vaccine and not found any microchips.

The truth is that there are far easier ways to track the population (mobile phones/ bank cards etc) than biological trackers.



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MYTH: Vaccines are unsafe - that is why no pregnant women were in trials



TRUTH: Pregnant women & children are not usually included in initial trials.

The current COVID vaccines are not recommended for most children at this stage. The guidance for pregnant women is to make a decision based on risk. This does not mean it is unsafe in these groups.

It is reflective of them not being in the main trial groups and a sign of the safety protocols taken.



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MYTH: Pharmaceutical companies are all evil so we can't trust them



TRUTH: The pharmaceutical industry has sometimes acted unethically but this does not mean we should reject everything they do.

The acceptability of a technology is not based purely on the ethical or moral track record of the individual companies involved e.g. social media, food, cars etc.

We take painkillers, antibiotics and chemotherapy medicines from the same companies.



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MYTH: The vaccine was approved too quickly to be safe



TRUTH: The speed of approval was mainly due to cutting red tape rather than cutting corners.

There has been unprecedented worldwide scientific collaboration and funding to create the COVID vaccine. This global effort has allowed scientists to work at record speed, and complete years of work in months.



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MYTH: The vaccine may modify your DNA



TRUTH: There is no way that RNA can change the DNA of anyone.

The COVID vaccine uses mRNA technology. The mRNA vaccine teaches our cells to make a protein that triggers a protective immune response. The mRNA is broken down soon after it enters the body.

mRNA never enters the nucleus of the cell, where our DNA is kept.



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MYTH: The inventor of the PCR test said it was not made to detect diseases such as COVID



TRUTH: There is no evidence that Dr Kary Mullis, the inventor of the PCR process, ever said this.

The PCR process helps scientists to detect genetic material. If a sample contains the genetic material of the COVID virus then the test will be positive.

Dr Mullis died in August 2019, months before the first case of COVID was reported.



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MYTH: PCR is inaccurate and overestimating COVID infections



TRUTH: No test is 100% accurate but there is no evidence to suggest that the concerns regarding COVID infections and the severity of this disease are misplaced.

Whilst there are false positives and false negatives with all tests, data including the number of hospitalisations with symptoms of COVID and number of deaths give us a good indication of how serious the situation is.



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MYTH: 99.97% recover from COVID, but 3% get major side effects from vaccine



TRUTH: These numbers are false. We should remember that over a million people have died from the virus and millions more are suffering long term complications.

The small risk of minimal and often short term side effects of the vaccine do not outweigh the risk of long term complications or death from COVID.



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MYTH: Wearing a mask is bad for your health



TRUTH: There is no evidence to show that wearing a mask is harmful, but there is evidence to show that it can protect.

We all have a role to play in reducing the spread of COVID. We must continue to practice social distancing, wearing masks and handwashing to help reduce the spread of COVID.



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MYTH: We should just wait for herd immunity



TRUTH: The number of deaths that will occur before we possibly achieve herd immunity will be disastrous.

Herd immunity works if the majority of the population has had COVID.

Official data suggests over 2 million people in the UK have had COVID. To achieve herd immunity, the number of deaths would also increase dramatically and be disastrous for our country.



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MYTH: If hospitals are so busy why are Nightingale hospitals empty?



TRUTH: The Nightingale “Hospitals” were set up as ITU and not with many other facilities. There’s no extra staff to run them at present.

Latest information suggests the NHS is struggling with the number of new hospitalisations due to COVID.

This is on top of the usual NHS functions that have had to be delayed e.g. elective surgery due to the pandemic.



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MYTH: A nurse took the COVID vaccine & died on camera



TRUTH: The nurse fainted. After recovering, she gave a press conference to say she has fainted previously when in pain.

The nurse recovered. The vaccines have been approved after analysis of safety data from clinical trials involving tens of thousands of patients.

Further data is now being collected from patients receiving the vaccine.



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MYTH: There's no point getting vaccinated due to new COVID strains.



TRUTH: There is currently no evidence to suggest that the vaccines will not protect against the new strains.

It is normal for viruses such as the flu virus to go through genetic changes.

Scientists are looking at the characteristics of the new strains. Small variations do not often affect the effectiveness of a vaccine.



MYTH: Vaccines contain alcohol & therefore are impermissible



TRUTH: The Oxford AZ Vaccine contains ethanol at an amount that is less than what is found in natural foods or bread.

Many scholars have deemed the Oxford AZ Vaccine to be permissible as the amount of ethanol is negligible.

The religious permissibility of any product is for scholars to decide so please refer to those you trust.



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MYTH: Vaccines contain pork or other animal derivatives



TRUTH: There are no pork or other animal ingredients in the current available vaccines.

Even in circumstances when there are impermissible ingredients in a vaccine, many renowned scholars have concluded that they are permissible if there are no alternative options and the data suggests that the vaccine is of benefit.



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MYTH: The COVID vaccines can give you COVID



TRUTH: No. You cannot get COVID from the vaccine.

The COVID vaccines teach our immune systems how to recognise and fight the virus that causes COVID.

This process can cause side effects which are usually mild. The current vaccines cannot make you sick with COVID.



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MYTH: COVID vaccines can make you infertile (unable to have children)



TRUTH: There is no evidence to suggest that the COVID vaccines cause infertility.

The COVID vaccines available in the UK have been shown to be effective and to have a good safety profile.

Following COVID vaccine approval, the MHRA has a robust and proactive safety monitoring strategy in place which will identify any common side effects.



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MYTH: Catching COVID after having the vaccine is proof they don't work



TRUTH: The immune system can take a number of days or weeks to generate an immune response before protection from the virus begins.

The COVID vaccine will reduce the chance of suffering from the serious complications of COVID.

No vaccine is 100% effective, so everyone should continue to take the recommended precautions to avoid infection.



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MYTH: You don't need vaccination if you already had COVID



TRUTH: We do not know how long protection remains after COVID infection, therefore having the vaccine is advised.

People infected with COVID are likely to be protected for some months but further research is required. These individuals could still transmit the virus to others.

The current advice is to wait 4 weeks after having COVID before having the vaccine.



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MYTH: You can choose which COVID vaccine you get



TRUTH: Almost no one will be offered a choice due to logistics and availability. The best vaccine is therefore the one you are offered.

All the available vaccines offer a high level of immunity. People should be assured that whichever vaccine they get has been approved by the MHRA and met strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness.



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MYTH: If I decide not to take the vaccine, it does not affect others



TRUTH: The vaccine helps to prevent the serious complications of COVID. It also helps towards herd immunity.

Around 1 in 10 people who test positive for COVID exhibit symptoms for a period of 12 weeks or longer. This can have an effect on close ones and the NHS.

Achieving herd immunity with safe and effective vaccines makes diseases rarer and saves lives.



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MYTH: I'm young & low risk so the COVID vaccine isn't for me



TRUTH: In the last few weeks, adults aged 18 - 64 have accounted for 40% of daily covid admissions to hospital.

Although the risk is higher with age and comorbidities, COVID can affect people of any age. COVID can cause long term complications and death. The vaccine is designed to reduce the risk of these disastrous consequences.



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MYTH: Only the really sick & elderly are dying from COVID



TRUTH:



MYTH: There is no liability for anyone if the vaccines have problems



TRUTH: The manufacturers are not exempt from all liabilities.

To encourage pharmaceutical companies to produce COVID vaccines without incurring substantial financial loss, the Government has given them immunity from civil liability and included the vaccines in the Vaccine Damage Payment Scheme.

The companies still have obligations they need to fulfil. This is not a new concept. Many common vaccines already fall under this scheme.



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MYTH: There are health professionals who object to the COVID vaccine



TRUTH: The majority of health professionals, public health experts and scientists are promoting the COVID vaccines.

The aim of the COVID vaccines is to prevent people from becoming severely ill and dying from COVID.

Scientists from around the world have come together to develop safe COVID vaccines that will help to save thousands of lives.



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