

June 2021

# At a glance: COVID-19 vaccine research insights

This research is part of an ongoing series that looks into New Zealanders' attitudes and public sentiment towards the COVID-19 vaccine.

## Background

Horizon Research, in association with the School of Population Health, University of Auckland, have been commissioned to survey New Zealanders' attitudes and sentiment towards COVID-19 vaccines.

Seven distinct but related online surveys were undertaken:

- 1,451 respondents between 24 – 28 September 2020
- 1,438 respondents between 1 – 4 December 2020
- 1,317 respondents between 16 – 19 February 2021
- 1,350 respondents between 26 March – 1 April 2021
- 1,387 respondents between 23 April – 2 May 2021
- 1,234 respondents between 28 – 30 May 2021
- 1,472 respondents between 25 – 30 June 2021

## Key research findings

The following are some of the key insights in the June findings<sup>1</sup>, compared with previous findings:

### Accepting a vaccine

- 72 percent of respondents not already vaccinated said they were likely to get vaccine, down from 77 percent in May.
- 66 percent of Māori respondents not already vaccinated said they were likely to get a vaccine.
- 55 percent of Pasifika respondents not already vaccinated said they were likely to get a vaccine.
- Respondents of Indian (87 percent) or Asian (84 percent) ethnicity, not already vaccinated, are more likely to get a vaccine compared with other ethnicities.

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- Nine percent of respondents not already vaccinated said they were unsure if they would get a vaccine.
- There has been no significant change to the overall potential uptake, including those already vaccinated and those who are likely to get a vaccine. This is estimated to be 77 percent, from 80 percent in May, 77 percent in April and 69 percent in March. The difference from the May and April results is not statistically significant and the result should be regarded as “no change”.
- Overall potential uptake by Māori respondents, including those already vaccinated and those who are likely to get a vaccine, remains steady at 74 percent (75 percent in May).
- Overall potential uptake by Pasifika respondents, including those already vaccinated and those who are likely to get a vaccine, has dropped to 63 percent from 78 percent in May, but up slightly from 59 percent in March 2021. (Note: the Pasifika sample size was 72, in line with their population proportion, so results are less statistically reliable and should be treated as an indication only.)
- Overall potential uptake by respondents who identify as disabled is 80 percent.
- Respondents under 18 years old and between 34-44 years old are the most unsure about getting a vaccine.
- Overall, 81 percent of respondents felt that it was important that everyone in New Zealand who was able to be vaccinated, was vaccinated.
- If the vaccine is made available for 12 to 15-year olds, the number of caregivers likely to allow the children they care for to be vaccinated remains steady at 58 percent (55 percent in May).
- Pasifika and “Other European”<sup>2</sup> respondents were the least likely to allow the 12 to 17-year-olds for whom they were the primary caregiver to be vaccinated, while Māori were the most likely to allow them to be vaccinated.

## Barriers to uptake

- 19 percent of respondents not already vaccinated say they are unlikely to have a vaccine, up from 15 percent in May. Of that 19 percent, 10 percent will “definitely not” get a vaccine (7 percent in May). Note that it is likely that, as the number vaccinated increases, those who are unlikely to get a vaccine will form a higher proportion of those who have not yet been vaccinated.
- Respondents aged 24-34 years are the least likely to get a vaccine.
- The main reasons for being unsure or unlikely to get a vaccine continue to be concerns about long-term effects, safety and waiting to see if others have side-effects.
- 43 percent of respondents who will ‘definitely not’ get a vaccine say they don’t see the need to get a vaccine, this is a decrease from May 2021 (55 percent).
- DHB regions where the likelihood for respondents to accept a vaccine is lower than the national average include Counties Manukau, Northland, Bay of Plenty, Tairāwhiti, Hawke’s Bay, West Coast, Whanganui, Nelson/Marlborough and South Canterbury.<sup>3</sup>

## Making the decision to get a vaccine

- Half of respondents not yet vaccinated say that helping protect the health of their family/whānau and those closest to them is a key reason that will influence them to get a vaccine, this is followed by helping to protect all New Zealanders and helping reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection and the prospect of further lockdowns and economic harm.
- In making the decision to get a vaccine, people continue to think about potential side effects, what might happen if they have an adverse reaction, how the vaccine will affect their health and that it is too soon to see if there are long-term side effects.

- Compared with the May results, Māori respondents who have not yet been vaccinated are more concerned about side effects and how the side effects might affect them, and Pasifika respondents appear to be more nervous about getting the vaccine.

### Getting the vaccine

- Respondents would prefer to get a vaccine from their doctor (70 percent), a practice nurse (39 percent), pharmacy (28 percent) or a 'pop up' clinic (28 percent).
- 69 percent of respondents would like to be able to go for a vaccine at the same time as other members of their whānau/family regardless of the age of the members of their whānau/family, or the respondent's age.<sup>4</sup>
- Overall, a quarter of respondents, not yet vaccinated, want to be vaccinated immediately; this rises to a third for people in groups 3 and 4.
- 65 percent of respondents, not already vaccinated, support the plan to offer vaccines according to the age groups people are in and 23 percent say they "neither support nor oppose" the plan.
- Those respondents who live with impairments or long-term health conditions and those who identify as disabled are more likely than average to respond to a personal conversation with a health provider they trust.

### Communication and information

- Almost all respondents (91 percent) said they had seen an official COVID-19 information and vaccine advertisement in the 30 days leading up to taking the survey.
- TVNZ, followed by Facebook, Stuff.co.nz and commercial television remain the top places where respondents have seen, heard or found information on the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Respondents who are more likely to need more information are more likely to be Māori, a home-maker (not otherwise employed), from a one parent home with one or two children at home, be a teacher, nurse, in the police or other trained service worker, or have a low household income.
- For those respondents, not vaccinated, who need more information, the main things they need to know are information on side effects and risks, and on the long-term effects of the vaccine, based on longer and/or more clinical studies.

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1. Note: Margins of error for the ethnic group sub-samples at a 95% confidence level are: Māori ±5.6%; Pasifika ±11.5%; Asian ±7.5%; Indian ±8.9%; NZ European/Pākehā ±3.2%; Other European ±10.3%; Other ±26.2%.

2. "Other European" means ethnic Europeans from other countries such as anywhere in Europe, Ireland, the British Isles, Australia, South Africa, Canada, etc.

3. Tairāwhiti, West Coast, Whanganui, Lakes and South Canterbury DHB sample sizes were less than 50, in line with their population proportion, so results are less statistically reliable and should be treated as an indication only.

4. Note that going alone for a COVID-19 vaccination was not presented as an option.