

Sample outreach scripts and best practices



Communicating consistently about routine vaccines is an important part of normalizing them. It can also help parents feel more confident about vaccines. These sample scripts can help you and others in your practice talk about vaccines at every opportunity.

Patient portals/electronic health records (EHR) and texting

Using your patient portal to communicate about vaccines is a very efficient way to consistently keep vaccines in the conversation. Using special times of the year is particularly effective in calling attention to the benefits of vaccines. Use these sample scripts to support your communications through the portal. With some tweaks, these can also work as text messages. Some messages include “click here” to suggest where you may include a link to your patient portal or practice website. You can also include a link to LetsGetRealAboutVaccines.org, which has a wealth of information about vaccines and the diseases they prevent.

TEXT/PATIENT PORTAL/EHR

New Year's	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The new year is a great time to prioritize health. Is your child up to date on their vaccines? Call us to find out.• Happy New Year! Start the new year off right by making sure your child has the best protection. Talk to us about their vaccines.• Happy New Year! We wish your family a healthy year. Vaccines are part of that. Check with us to make sure your child is up to date.
Winter Holidays	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It's the most wonderful time of the year! Don't let it be spoiled by a preventable disease. Call us to make sure your child is up to date on their vaccines.• Do you have big plans this holiday season? Don't let a preventable disease ruin your plans. If your child is not up to date on their vaccines, then call us to schedule an appointment.• Don't invite a preventable disease to your holiday activities. Make sure your child is up to date on their vaccines. Click here to get your child caught up.
National Infant Immunization Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Next week is National Infant Immunization Week! It's a great reminder to make sure your child is up to date on their routine vaccines. Call us to find out more.• It's National Infant Immunization Week, a great time to make sure young children are protected from preventable diseases. Call us to find out whether your child is up to date on their vaccines.• It's National Infant Immunization Week, highlighting the importance of vaccines for young children. Click here to check on your child's vaccines.

End of School Year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School's ending. Before sending your child to camp or to visit grandparents, make sure they're up to date on their vaccines. Call us to schedule an appointment.• Make sure your summer plans don't include your child being sick from a vaccine-preventable disease. Click here to see whether your child is up to date on their vaccines.• Do you have exciting summer plans? We're pretty sure they don't include chickenpox or measles. Call us to make sure your child is up to date on their vaccines.
Back to School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As part of your back-to-school prep, include your child's vaccines. If they are not up to date, now is a great time to get them caught up. Call us to schedule an appointment.• Backpack? Check. Markers? Check. Did you include vaccines on your back-to-school to-do list? Call us to make sure your child has the best protection for the school year.• Set your child up for success in the new school year by making sure they are protected against contagious but preventable diseases. Click here to check on your child's vaccines.
Flu Season	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flu season is coming. Flu can be serious for children, but the flu vaccine can keep it from being serious for your child. Call us to schedule an appointment.• Fall is full of so much to do. But it's also flu season. Make sure your child gets their flu vaccine to help make fall a fun time. Call us to schedule an appointment.• It's flu season, so be sure to get the flu vaccine for your child. If your child is not up to date on their other vaccines, then now is a great time to do that too. Call us to schedule an appointment.
Vaccine Questions or Hesitancy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It's okay to have questions about vaccines, and we are here to help. Send us your questions, and we'll make sure you get the answers you need.• If you have vaccine questions, then you are not alone. We have facts to help. We're happy to share them. Call us to schedule an appointment.• We know that some parents have questions about vaccines. We want to help. Call us for more information. We want to help you make informed, confident decisions about your child's health.
New Patient	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome to our practice! We want to treat your child when they are sick and help prevent them from getting sick, too. Timely vaccines can help keep your child well. You can learn more at LetsGetRealAboutVaccines.org. If you have questions, we are here to help answer them, too.• Welcome to our practice! We are a pro-vaccine office, which means we are committed to helping answer parents' questions with credible information. If you have questions, don't hesitate to call us.• Welcome! We are excited to help keep your child healthy. Part of that is vaccines. Call us to make sure your child is up to date on theirs.

Helpful hints

- Tailor the messages to fit the needs of your practice. For instance, if your practice uses a patient portal for messages, then you may want to use that as the primary call to action to reduce the number of phone calls.
- It can help to have a designated “vaccine advocate” in your office to answer questions and provide links to credible information.
- Pre-populate your patient portal with links to *Let’s Get Real* and other credible sources of vaccine information.

Phone call best practices

- Train your front desk staff to check patients’ vaccine status and to communicate which vaccines are due when booking and confirming appointments. If parents have questions, then front desk staff should send credible vaccine links through the patient portal.
“No worries. I know the doctor will be happy to answer any questions at the appointment. In the meantime, I’ve put some links to information in the patient portal for you.”



- If a parent is strongly opposed to vaccines, then front desk staff should:
 - NOT try to convince them.
 - Make a note in the appointment documentation about the parent’s concerns so you are aware.
“I understand your concerns and have made a note for the doctor. We look forward to seeing you on [date] at [time]. Have a great day.”

If your practice has a trained “vaccine advocate,” then they can reach out to hesitant parents for a conversation. The ARM approach is a useful training that will help vaccine advocates have confident conversations with parents.

Patient encounter best practices

- Be clear with your staff that you are a pro-vaccine practice and expect all staff to support that.
- Make sure everyone in your office is well-versed on vaccine facts. This includes your medical assistants and front desk staff. [LetsGetRealAboutVaccines.org](https://www.letsgetrealaboutvaccines.org) has resources and tools to help inform and train your staff.
- When staff talk about vaccines with parents and children:
 - Keep it light and positive:
“I see Mac is due for his MMR vaccine. That’s awesome that he’ll be protected.”
 - Use the opportunity for social norming and to boost parent confidence:
“I vaccinated my son/niece and am so glad I did.”
 - For younger children, talk about superhero status:
“Mac, it’s like you’re going to be a superhero fighting disease. That’s so cool.”
 - If they encounter hesitation, be supportive:
“I understand. Some parents have questions. I’ll let the doctor know.”



For vaccine catch-up guidance, please visit:
<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/child-adolescent-catch-up.html>

