

# COVID-19– Vaccine Hesitancy

Fielded March 2021

Every month, IBM Watson Health® conducts a health poll that surveys approximately 3,000 Americans to gauge attitudes and opinions on a wide range of healthcare issues.

This health poll is powered by the IBM Watson Health PULSE® Healthcare Survey, an independently funded, multi-modal (land line, cell phone, internet) survey that collects information from approximately 60,000 U.S. households annually.

The results depicted in this report represent responses from 2,890 survey participants interviewed from March 1–15, 2021, with a margin of error of +/- 1.8%.

## Executive summary

This health poll asked Americans about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and their opinions about receiving a COVID-19 vaccination.

Of all respondents:

# 32%

said they had received a COVID-19 vaccination. This rate tends to increase with age, education and income.

# 44%

of those who had not taken the COVID-19 vaccine said the main reason is because it is Not Available or Offered. Other reasons given included Concern Over Safety (14%) and Concern Over Side-Effects (11%).

# 54%

of those respondents who indicated they had received the vaccine said they were senior citizens, 18% said they were front line workers and 11% said they were medical workers.

# 36%

of those who said they have not received a vaccine said they would take one if it was available. Other reasons given that would get them to take the vaccine were Additional safety information (8%), Additional side effect information (7%) and Doctor recommendation (7%).

# 50%

said they planned to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, 32% said they would not and 18% said they did not know if they would receive one.

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**Note:** Bolded figures are statistically significant.

**Question 1:** Have you received the COVID-19 vaccination?

**Question 2:** (For those who have received the COVID-19 vaccination) Are you a medical worker?

|                               | Yes          | No           |                               | Yes          | No            |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>&lt;35</b>                 | <b>20.5%</b> | <b>76.4%</b> | <b>&lt;35</b>                 | <b>19.4%</b> | <b>80.6%</b>  |
| <b>35 - 64</b>                | <b>24.6%</b> | <b>74.6%</b> | <b>35 - 64</b>                | 16.1%        | 83.9%         |
| <b>65+</b>                    | <b>61.1%</b> | <b>38.6%</b> | <b>65+</b>                    | <b>3.4%</b>  | <b>96.6%</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 31.6%        | 67.2%        | <b>Total</b>                  | 11.3%        | 88.7%         |
| <b>HS or Less</b>             | <b>24.6%</b> | <b>73.5%</b> | <b>HS or Less</b>             | 9.3%         | 90.7%         |
| <b>Some College/Associate</b> | <b>23.7%</b> | <b>75.5%</b> | <b>Some College/Associate</b> | 10.4%        | 89.6%         |
| <b>College+</b>               | <b>40.0%</b> | <b>58.8%</b> | <b>College+</b>               | 12.3%        | 87.7%         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 31.6%        | 67.2%        | <b>Total</b>                  | 11.3%        | 88.7%         |
| <b>Silent Generation</b>      | <b>78.2%</b> | <b>21.8%</b> | <b>Silent Generation</b>      | <b>0.0%</b>  | <b>100.0%</b> |
| <b>Baby Boomers</b>           | <b>51.0%</b> | <b>48.3%</b> | <b>Baby Boomers</b>           | <b>4.6%</b>  | <b>95.4%</b>  |
| <b>Generation X</b>           | 25.6%        | 73.9%        | <b>Generation X</b>           | 16.7%        | 83.3%         |
| <b>Millennials</b>            | <b>20.6%</b> | <b>76.9%</b> | <b>Millennials</b>            | <b>19.3%</b> | <b>80.7%</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 31.6%        | 67.2%        | <b>Total</b>                  | 11.3%        | 88.7%         |
| <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | <b>20.6%</b> | <b>77.7%</b> | <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | 13.4%        | 86.6%         |
| <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | <b>30.1%</b> | <b>68.9%</b> | <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | 7.9%         | 92.1%         |
| <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | 28.3%        | 70.5%        | <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | 13.2%        | 86.8%         |
| <b>\$100k+</b>                | <b>48.5%</b> | <b>50.4%</b> | <b>\$100k+</b>                | 12.4%        | 87.6%         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 31.6%        | 67.2%        | <b>Total</b>                  | 11.3%        | 88.7%         |

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**Question 3:** (For those who have received the COVID-19 vaccination) Are you a front-line worker?

|                               | Yes          | No            |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| <b>&lt;35</b>                 | <b>42.8%</b> | <b>57.2%</b>  |
| <b>35 - 64</b>                | 24.2%        | 75.8%         |
| <b>65+</b>                    | <b>2.7%</b>  | <b>97.3%</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 18.3%        | 81.7%         |
| <b>HS or Less</b>             | 18.7%        | 81.3%         |
| <b>Some College/Associate</b> | 15.3%        | 84.7%         |
| <b>College+</b>               | 19.2%        | 80.8%         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 18.3%        | 81.7%         |
| <b>Silent Generation</b>      | <b>0.0%</b>  | <b>100.0%</b> |
| <b>Baby Boomers</b>           | <b>4.3%</b>  | <b>95.7%</b>  |
| <b>Generation X</b>           | 24.8%        | 75.2%         |
| <b>Millennials</b>            | <b>39.4%</b> | <b>60.6%</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 18.3%        | 81.7%         |
| <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | 20.2%        | 79.8%         |
| <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | 19.8%        | 80.2%         |
| <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | 13.9%        | 86.1%         |
| <b>\$100k+</b>                | 20.9%        | 79.1%         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 18.3%        | 81.7%         |

**Question 4:** (For those who have received the COVID-19 vaccination) Are you a senior citizen?

|                               | Yes          | No           |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| <b>HS or Less</b>             | 45.7%        | 54.3%        |
| <b>Some College/Associate</b> | 60.4%        | 39.6%        |
| <b>College+</b>               | 54.9%        | 45.1%        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 54.4%        | 45.6%        |
| <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | <b>41.5%</b> | <b>58.5%</b> |
| <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | 58.2%        | 41.8%        |
| <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | 56.4%        | 43.6%        |
| <b>\$100k+</b>                | 53.9%        | 46.1%        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 54.4%        | 45.6%        |

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**Question 5:** (For those who have not received the COVID-19 vaccination)  
Do you plan to get the COVID-19 vaccination?

|                               | <b>Yes</b>   | <b>No</b>    | <b>Don't know</b> |
|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
| <b>&lt;35</b>                 | <b>42.7%</b> | <b>39.6%</b> | 16.7%             |
| <b>35 - 64</b>                | 51.7%        | 29.0%        | 18.8%             |
| <b>65+</b>                    | 56.1%        | 28.1%        | 15.7%             |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 49.5%        | 32.1%        | 17.8%             |
| <b>HS or Less</b>             | <b>38.0%</b> | <b>43.6%</b> | 17.8%             |
| <b>Some College/Associate</b> | <b>41.5%</b> | 36.6%        | 21.1%             |
| <b>College+</b>               | <b>63.1%</b> | <b>21.2%</b> | 15.2%             |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 49.5%        | 32.1%        | 17.8%             |
| <b>Silent Generation</b>      | 21.7%        | 53.0%        | 25.3%             |
| <b>Baby Boomers</b>           | <b>60.4%</b> | <b>23.1%</b> | 16.0%             |
| <b>Generation X</b>           | 51.3%        | 29.7%        | 18.7%             |
| <b>Millennials</b>            | <b>43.5%</b> | <b>38.0%</b> | 17.6%             |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 49.5%        | 32.1%        | 17.8%             |
| <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | <b>39.6%</b> | <b>40.2%</b> | 19.2%             |
| <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | 43.4%        | 32.8%        | <b>23.6%</b>      |
| <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | 51.7%        | 32.2%        | 15.7%             |
| <b>\$100k+</b>                | <b>71.3%</b> | <b>18.5%</b> | <b>10.1%</b>      |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 49.5%        | 32.1%        | 17.8%             |

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**Note:** Care should be taken when interpreting Q6 and Q8 due to small sample sizes.

**Question 6:** (For those who have not received the COVID-19 vaccination) What is the main reason you have not received the COVID-19 vaccination? (Note: Details excluded for categories with less than 5% response rate)

|                               | Not available/<br>offered | Safety concerns | Side effects | I don't need in general | Questions/<br>Concerns about vaccine |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;35</b>                 | 38.4%                     | 12.7%           | 14.5%        | 10.0%                   | 7.6%                                 |
| <b>35 - 64</b>                | 48.0%                     | 14.6%           | 10.6%        | 7.6%                    | 7.0%                                 |
| <b>65+</b>                    | 39.4%                     | 19.5%           | 13.4%        | 5.2%                    | 6.5%                                 |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 44.0%                     | 14.7%           | 12.2%        | 8.1%                    | 7.1%                                 |
| <b>HS or Less</b>             | <b>33.1%</b>              | 14.5%           | 13.2%        | <b>12.9%</b>            | 7.4%                                 |
| <b>Some College/Associate</b> | 41.4%                     | 16.1%           | 12.0%        | 8.5%                    | 7.9%                                 |
| <b>College+</b>               | <b>53.0%</b>              | 13.6%           | 11.6%        | <b>4.7%</b>             | 6.4%                                 |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 44.0%                     | 14.7%           | 12.2%        | 8.1%                    | 7.1%                                 |
| <b>Silent Generation</b>      | 23.7%                     | 15.6%           | 24.3%        | 13.7%                   | 7.7%                                 |
| <b>Baby Boomers</b>           | 49.9%                     | 16.9%           | 11.0%        | 4.5%                    | 6.1%                                 |
| <b>Generation X</b>           | 48.7%                     | 16.1%           | 11.1%        | 6.6%                    | 5.6%                                 |
| <b>Millennials</b>            | <b>37.2%</b>              | 12.2%           | 13.4%        | 11.0%                   | 9.1%                                 |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 44.0%                     | 14.7%           | 12.2%        | 8.1%                    | 7.1%                                 |
| <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | <b>37.0%</b>              | 13.7%           | 15.0%        | 8.6%                    | 7.4%                                 |
| <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | 43.5%                     | 16.1%           | 11.8%        | 8.0%                    | 7.4%                                 |
| <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | 45.5%                     | 15.0%           | 11.4%        | 9.4%                    | 6.4%                                 |
| <b>\$100k+</b>                | <b>52.1%</b>              | 12.4%           | 10.9%        | 5.5%                    | 7.1%                                 |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 44.0%                     | 14.7%           | 12.2%        | 8.1%                    | 7.1%                                 |

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**Question 6:** (For those who have not received the COVID-19 vaccination) What is the main reason you have not received the COVID-19 vaccination? (Note: Details excluded for categories with less than 5% response rate)

|              | Other | Concern about vaccine giving COVID-19 | Don't know | No insurance (cost) | Already had COVID-19 | Refused | Insurance may not cover (cost) |
|--------------|-------|---------------------------------------|------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Total</b> | 3.6%  | 3.2%                                  | 2.0%       | 1.9%                | 1.8%                 | 1.0%    | 0.6%                           |

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**Question 7:** How often do you feel depressed?

|                               | <b>All of the time</b> | <b>Most of the time</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Rarely</b> | <b>Never</b> |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>&lt;35</b>                 | <b>12.8%</b>           | <b>19.1%</b>            | 30.0%            | 26.8%         | <b>10.4%</b> |
| <b>35 - 64</b>                | 9.2%                   | 12.9%                   | 32.5%            | 28.9%         | 16.2%        |
| <b>65+</b>                    | <b>1.2%</b>            | <b>2.4%</b>             | 29.1%            | <b>36.4%</b>  | <b>30.9%</b> |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 8.4%                   | 12.3%                   | 31.1%            | 30.0%         | 17.9%        |
| <b>HS or Less</b>             | <b>12.0%</b>           | <b>17.8%</b>            | 30.4%            | <b>25.0%</b>  | 14.2%        |
| <b>Some College/Associate</b> | 6.6%                   | 12.6%                   | 34.8%            | 28.5%         | 17.3%        |
| <b>College+</b>               | 7.7%                   | <b>9.3%</b>             | 29.2%            | 33.5%         | 20.1%        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 8.4%                   | 12.3%                   | 31.1%            | 30.0%         | 17.9%        |
| <b>Silent Generation</b>      | <b>1.6%</b>            | <b>1.1%</b>             | 25.1%            | 41.0%         | <b>31.2%</b> |
| <b>Baby Boomers</b>           | <b>1.2%</b>            | <b>4.3%</b>             | 29.1%            | <b>37.5%</b>  | <b>27.8%</b> |
| <b>Generation X</b>           | 10.4%                  | 12.1%                   | 33.0%            | 27.7%         | 16.3%        |
| <b>Millennials</b>            | <b>11.9%</b>           | <b>18.9%</b>            | 30.9%            | 26.2%         | <b>11.5%</b> |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 8.4%                   | 12.3%                   | 31.1%            | 30.0%         | 17.9%        |
| <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | 11.4%                  | <b>21.7%</b>            | 32.6%            | <b>22.7%</b>  | <b>11.1%</b> |
| <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | 8.1%                   | 10.7%                   | 31.9%            | 28.9%         | 20.2%        |
| <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | <b>4.2%</b>            | 10.3%                   | 32.8%            | 34.6%         | 17.8%        |
| <b>\$100k+</b>                | 11.8%                  | <b>8.0%</b>             | 26.1%            | 32.3%         | 21.6%        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 8.4%                   | 12.3%                   | 31.1%            | 30.0%         | 17.9%        |



# PULSE Health Poll: Vaccine Hesitancy

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**Question 8:** (For those who have not received the COVID-19 vaccination) What would it take for you to get the COVID-19 vaccination? (Note: Details excluded for categories with less than 5% response rate)

|                               | Availability | Will not take vaccine | Additional safety information | Additional side effect information |
|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <b>&lt;35</b>                 | <b>29.3%</b> | 21.6%                 | 10.5%                         | 8.7%                               |
| <b>35 - 64</b>                | 38.0%        | 18.1%                 | 7.0%                          | 6.9%                               |
| <b>65+</b>                    | 39.0%        | 18.4%                 | 6.6%                          | 4.3%                               |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 35.5%        | 19.2%                 | 8.0%                          | 7.1%                               |
| <b>HS or Less</b>             | <b>25.8%</b> | <b>28.1%</b>          | 8.4%                          | 6.8%                               |
| <b>Some College/Associate</b> | 32.9%        | 21.3%                 | 6.0%                          | 6.8%                               |
| <b>College+</b>               | <b>43.7%</b> | <b>11.9%</b>          | 9.4%                          | 7.6%                               |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 35.5%        | 19.2%                 | 8.0%                          | 7.1%                               |
| <b>Silent Generation</b>      | 17.9%        | 30.2%                 | 9.6%                          | 12.3%                              |
| <b>Baby Boomers</b>           | <b>45.4%</b> | 16.2%                 | 4.5%                          | 4.0%                               |
| <b>Generation X</b>           | 37.6%        | 19.9%                 | 6.1%                          | 6.6%                               |
| <b>Millennials</b>            | <b>29.5%</b> | 19.8%                 | <b>11.5%</b>                  | 8.8%                               |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 35.5%        | 19.2%                 | 8.0%                          | 7.1%                               |
| <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | <b>28.9%</b> | <b>26.5%</b>          | 6.4%                          | 6.2%                               |
| <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | 31.8%        | 19.9%                 | 5.9%                          | 8.5%                               |
| <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | 39.0%        | 17.1%                 | 9.7%                          | 6.6%                               |
| <b>\$100k+</b>                | <b>45.6%</b> | <b>9.8%</b>           | 12.5%                         | 7.2%                               |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 35.5%        | 19.2%                 | 8.0%                          | 7.1%                               |

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**Question 8:** (For those who have not received the COVID-19 vaccination) What would it take for you to get the COVID-19 vaccination? (Note: Details excluded for categories with less than 5% response rate)

|                               | <b>Doctor<br/>recommen-<br/>dation</b> | <b>Additional<br/>education</b> | <b>Larger<br/>numbers of<br/>vaccinations</b> |
|-------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|---|
| <b>&lt;35</b>                 | 4.9%                                   | 5.2%                            | 5.6%  |
| <b>35 - 64</b>                | 7.7%                                   | 6.0%                            | 4.8%  |
| <b>65+</b>                    | 6.9%                                   | 5.1%                            | 8.0%  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 6.7%                                   | 5.6%                            | 5.5%  |
| <b>HS or Less</b>             | 8.4%                                   | 5.7%                            | 4.0%  |
| <b>Some College/Associate</b> | 6.9%                                   | 5.5%                            | 5.0%  |
| <b>College+</b>               | 5.5%                                   | 5.6%                            | 6.8%  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 6.7%                                   | 5.6%                            | 5.5%  |
| <b>Silent Generation</b>      | 5.8%                                   | <b>0.0%</b>                     | 12.7%   |
| <b>Baby Boomers</b>           | 7.5%                                   | 4.0%                            | 7.9%  |
| <b>Generation X</b>           | 6.8%                                   | 6.0%                            | 4.3%  |
| <b>Millennials</b>            | 6.3%                                   | 6.0%                            | 5.4%  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 6.7%                                   | 5.6%                            | 5.5%  |
| <b>&lt;\$25k</b>              | 7.6%                                   | 5.3%                            | 4.1%  |
| <b>\$25k - \$49.9k</b>        | 7.5%                                   | 7.2%                            | 6.0%  |
| <b>\$50k - \$99.9k</b>        | 4.8%                                   | 4.0%                            | 6.2%  |
| <b>\$100k+</b>                | 7.6%                                   | 6.7%                            | 5.6%  |
| <b>Total</b>                  | 6.7%                                   | 5.6%                            | 5.5%  |

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**Question 8:** (For those who have not received the COVID-19 vaccination) What would it take for you to get the COVID-19 vaccination? (Note: Details excluded for categories with less than 5% response rate)

|              | <b>Don't know</b> | <b>Friends and family vaccinated</b> | <b>Other</b> | <b>Refused</b> |
|--------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Total</b> | 5.1%              | 3.2%                                 | 2.9%         | 1.0%           |

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