

Honest, factual information is key: A look at how older Hispanic/Latino adults view vaccinations

2020 AARP Vaccine Survey of Adults Ages 50 and Older

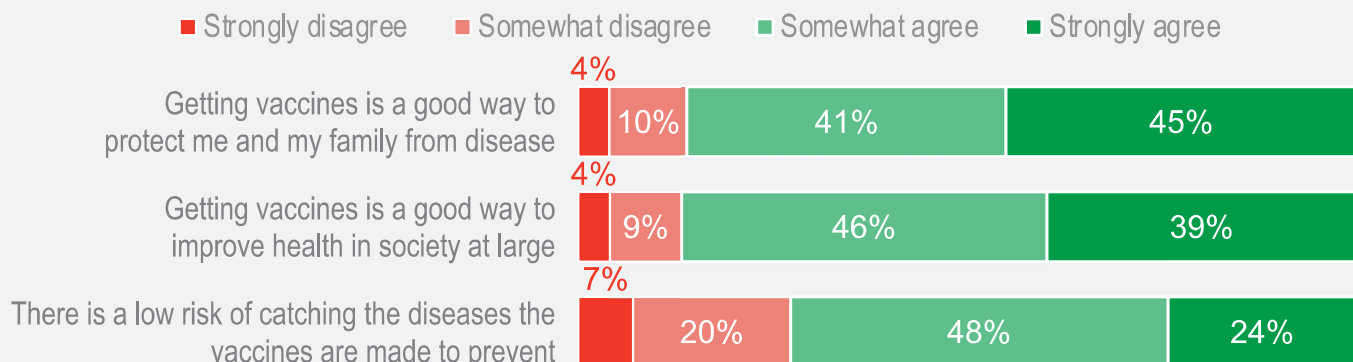


Most older Hispanic/Latino adults believe vaccines are generally safe.

Nearly nine in 10 (88%) older Hispanic/Latino adults ages 50-plus say vaccines in general are safe (somewhat safe 51%; very safe, 31%), especially among those with higher levels of education (a bachelor’s degree or higher). Additionally, more than four in five believe vaccines are a good way to protect themselves and their family (86%) and society at large (85%), and they believe they have a low risk of catching a disease from the vaccine (72%). Those with a bachelor’s degree or higher are significantly more likely to agree with these statements.

A recent survey on vaccinations illustrates **variations in beliefs among Hispanic/Latino adults ages 50-plus**. This understanding may provide insight on **possible strategies to help this population make informed decisions regarding vaccine acceptance**.

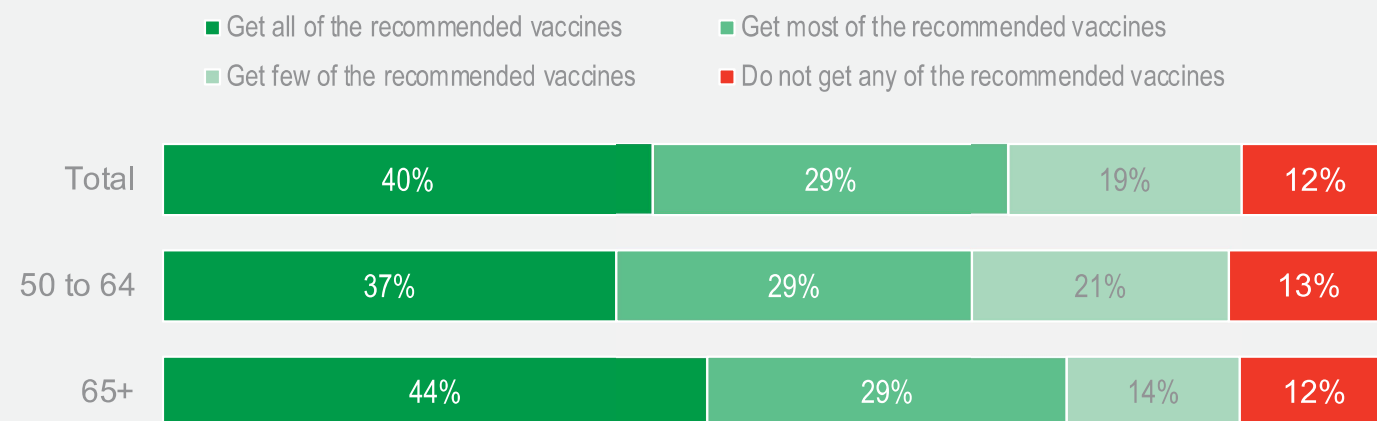
Beliefs about vaccines



While most say vaccines are safe, not all get the vaccines recommended by their doctor or health care provider.

Although most believe vaccines are safe, only two in five (40%) Hispanic/Latino adults ages 50-plus report they get all the vaccines their doctors or health care providers suggests. Those ages 65-plus are significantly more likely than those ages 50–64 to say they get all the recommended vaccines (44% vs. 37%). Three in 10 (31%) say they either only get a few (19%) of the recommended vaccines or do not get any at all (12%). Those with household incomes less than \$30,000 are more likely to say they do not get any of the recommended vaccinations.

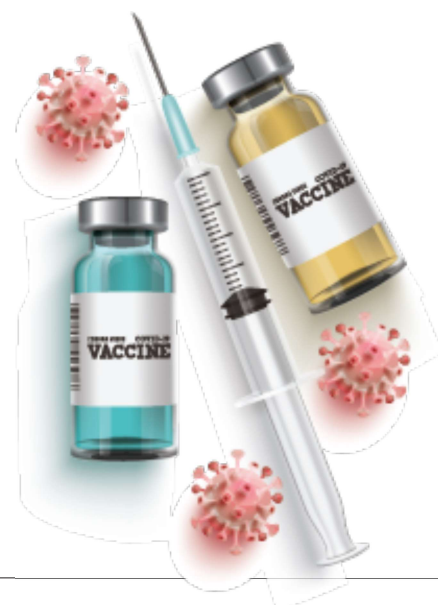
Percent getting all recommended vaccines

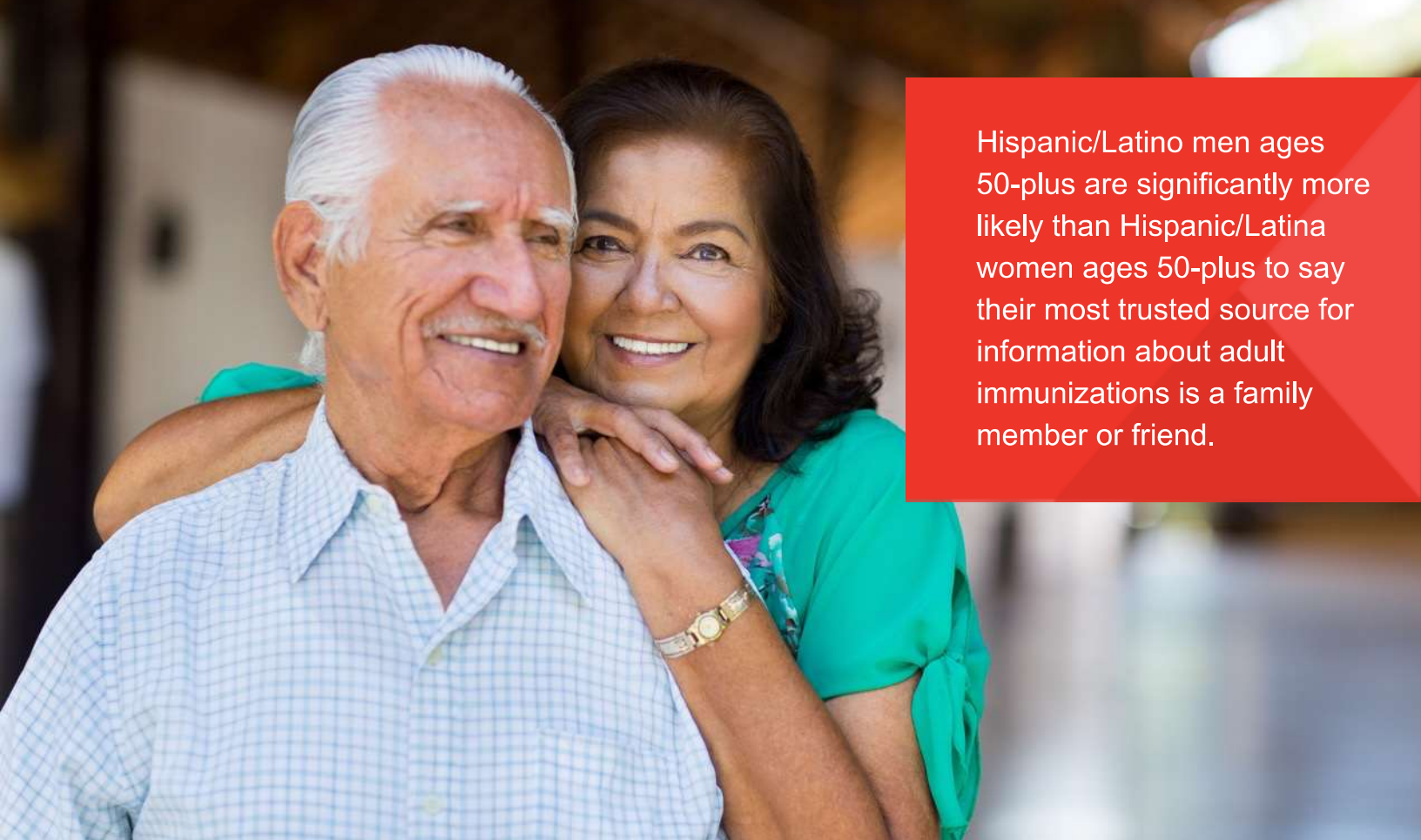


When prompted with a list, most say they trust their health care provider on information about adult immunizations.

Nearly two thirds (64%) of older Hispanic/Latino adults say they don't know whom to trust when it comes to information about adult immunizations. However, when prompted with a list, the majority (64%) say their doctor or health care provider is their most trusted source for that information. One in 10 (9%) cite the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) as their most trusted source, and one in ten (9%) say they do not trust any source regarding adult immunizations, with those ages 50–64 more likely to say they don't trust anyone on the topic (11% vs. 6%).

	Total	50-64	65+
Your doctor or other health care provider	64%	63%	67%
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	10%	9%	12%
I don't trust anyone on this topic	9%	11%	6%





Hispanic/Latino men ages 50-plus are significantly more likely than Hispanic/Latina women ages 50-plus to say their most trusted source for information about adult immunizations is a family member or friend.

Most Hispanics/Latinos ages 60-plus say they get a flu shot every year. However, a quarter of those ages 50–64 say they never get one.

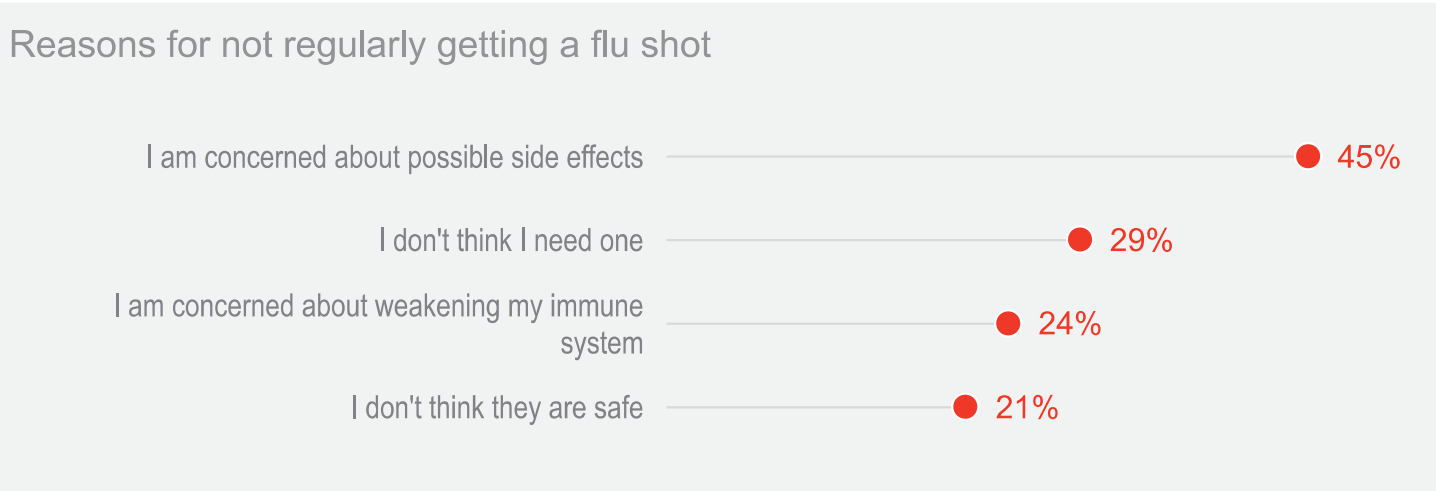
Nearly three in five (57%) Hispanic/Latino adults ages 50-plus say they get a flu shot every year or almost every year. Notably, those ages 65-plus (64%) get an annual flu shot more often than those ages 50–65 (53%). Moreover, a sizable portion of older Hispanic/Latino adults do not get a flu shot, with a quarter (25%) of those ages 50–64 saying they never get a flu shot, and nearly one in five (18%) ages 65-plus skip the flu shot altogether.

	Total	50-64	65+
Get a flu shot every year or almost every year	57%	53%	64%
Get a flu shot some years but not others	12%	14%	9%
Rarely get a flu shot	8%	8%	8%
Never get a flu shot	23%	25%	18%

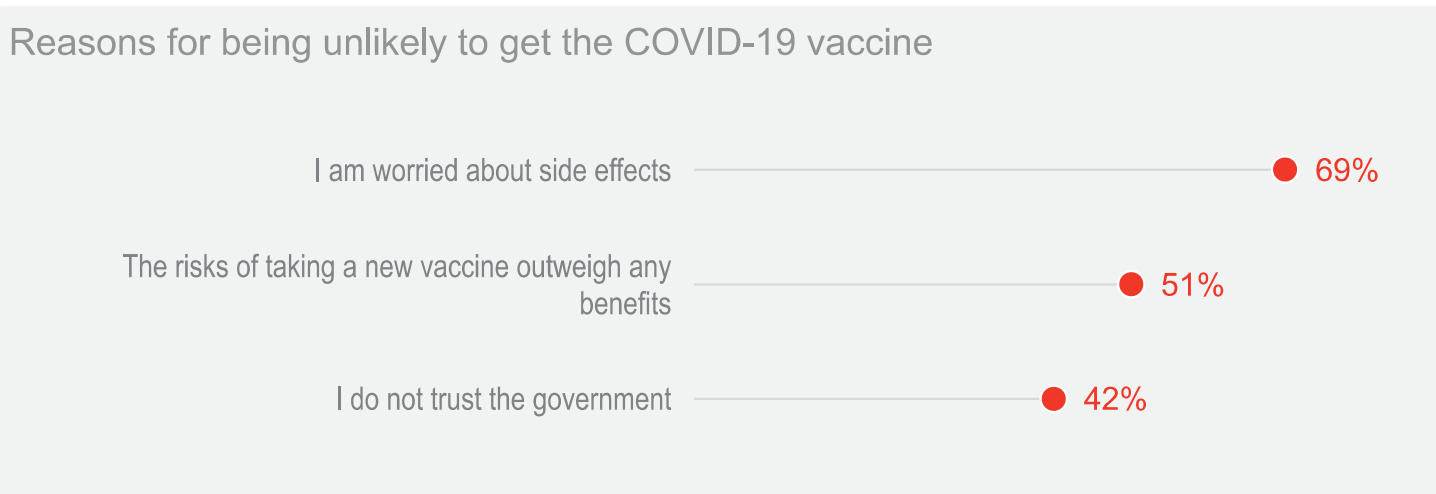
Older Hispanic/Latino adults cite concern about possible side effects as their top reason for flu and COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy.

Among those who do not regularly get a flu shot, nearly half (45%) say they are hesitant because they are concerned about possible side effects, despite the long history with the flu vaccine. Three in 10 (29%) say they don't get flu shots because they don't think they need one, and a quarter (25%) say they are concerned about weakening their immune system.

Concern about possible side effects tops the list of reasons cited for vaccine hesitancy for both influenza and COVID-19.



Those who say they are unlikely to get a COVID-19 vaccine cite similar reasons for hesitancy. At the time of the survey (September/October 2020), seven in 10 (69%) older Hispanic/Latino adults who said they are unlikely to get a COVID-19 vaccine said they are concerned about possible side effects. Half (51%) said they believe that risks associated with taking a new vaccine outweigh the possible benefits. Additionally, two in five (42%) said they probably would not get the vaccine because they do not trust the government.

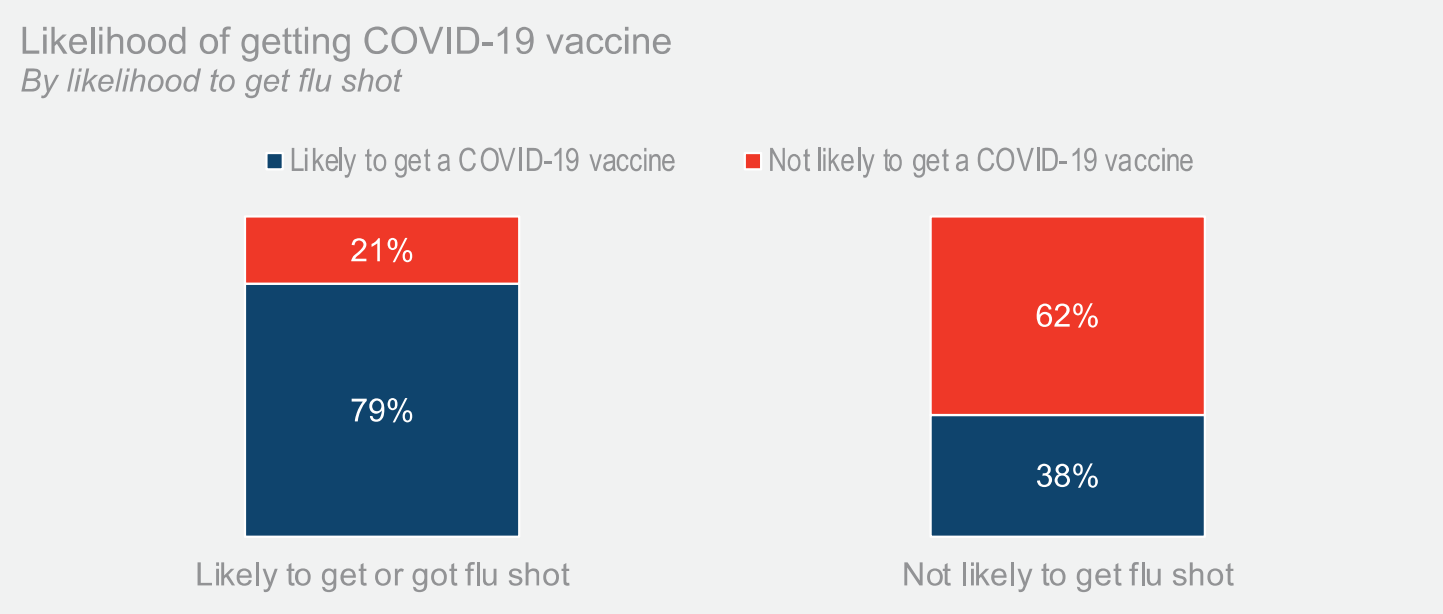




A tendency to forgo the flu vaccine may explain why some say they will not get a COVID-19 vaccine.

Many older Hispanic/Latino adults who are unlikely to get a flu shot are also unlikely to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

Hesitancy toward vaccines in general may explain why some say they will not get a COVID-19 vaccine. Two in five (62%) older Hispanic/Latino adults who say they are unlikely to get a flu vaccine also say they are unlikely to get a COVID-19 vaccine. Still, those who do get the flu vaccine have some additional hesitancy about the COVID-19 vaccine. One in five (21%) who say they are likely to get (or already got) a flu shot are hesitant to get a COVID-19 shot.



Some Hispanic/Latino older adults do not get other commonly recommended vaccinations. Overall vaccine compliance is highest among those ages 65-plus.

According to a vaccine compliance scale that comprises several questions related to reported actions regarding vaccines like flu and pneumonia, older Hispanic/Latino adults ages 65-plus are significantly more likely to say they have gotten or plan to get several recommended vaccines (a score of 5 out of 5 on the scale, where 5 = very likely). Three in 10 (30%) of those ages 50–64 scored a 0 or 1 on this scale, meaning either they do not follow their doctor or health care provider’s recommendations on vaccines and/or they do not get most (if any) of the vaccines listed. Comparatively, one in five (20%) of those ages 65-plus scored a 0 or 1 on the scale.

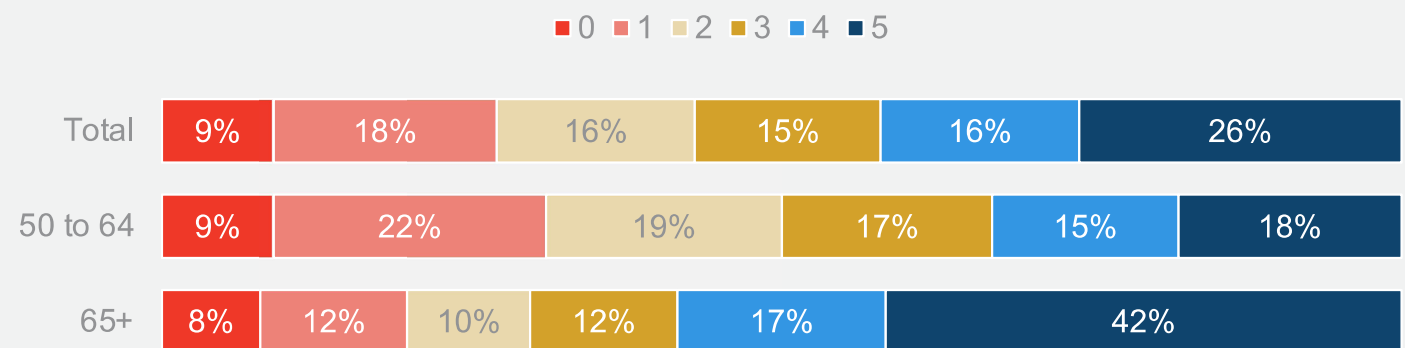


Vaccine Compliance Scale (1 point each)

- ✓ Get a flu shot every year
 - ✓ Get all/most vaccines recommended by doctor or health care provider
- Have gotten/plan to get vaccines for
- ✓ shingles
 - ✓ pneumonia
 - ✓ Tdap

*Scale created by AARP Research

Vaccine acceptance scale



While some Hispanics/Latino adults ages 50-plus are reluctant to get vaccines, they see the merits of vaccinations in general.



High beliefs, but low actions: Vaccine attitudes and beliefs do not necessarily correspond to reported actions, especially for Hispanic/Latino adults ages 50–64.

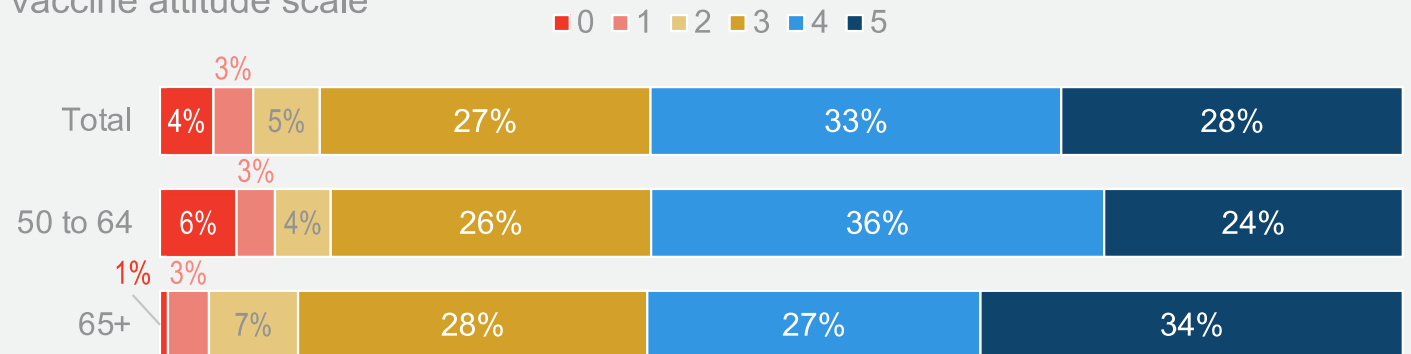
This vaccine attitude scale comprises several questions related to attitudes about vaccines in general as well as the future COVID-19 vaccine (asked September/October 2020). Unlike the compliance scale, the percentage of older Hispanic/Latino adults ages 65-plus is not much different from the percentage of those ages 50–64 who scored high (a 4 or 5 out of 5) on this scale (60% vs. 61%). Interestingly, only a small portion of those ages 50-plus scored extremely low: Only about one in 10 (12%) scored a 0, 1, or 2 out of 5. This result suggests that while some Hispanic/Latino adults 50-plus (especially those ages 50–64) are reluctant to get vaccinated, they see the merits of vaccinations in general.

Vaccine Attitude Scale (1 point each)

- ✓ Vaccines are safe
- ✓ Vaccines protect me and my family
- ✓ COVID-19 vaccine will be effective
- ✓ Vaccines provide few benefits' (disagree=1)
- ✓ Not sure who to trust when it comes to vaccines (disagree = 1)

*Scale created by AARP Research

Vaccine attitude scale





Implications

Though most Hispanic/Latino older adults have positive attitudes toward vaccines, many do not get the recommended vaccines and are unsure whom to trust to provide accurate and honest information about them. In fact, most Hispanic/Latino adults who are hesitant about getting a flu vaccine are also hesitant about getting a COVID-19 vaccine. Those who are hesitant say it's largely because they are concerned about possible side effects, and they believe risks associated with taking a new vaccine outweigh the possible benefits. The information in this study could help health care providers develop strategies to encourage older Hispanic/Latino adults to get the recommended vaccines.

To ensure older Hispanic/Latino adults make informed decisions regarding vaccines, health care providers — the most trusted source for vaccine information — can play an important role in providing comprehensive and straightforward information about vaccine benefits, safety, effectiveness, and possible side effects.

Methodology

This AARP vaccine survey was conducted online from September 28 through October 12, 2020 with a total sample of 1,722 adults ages 50-plus. The total sample included an oversample of 467 Hispanic/Latino respondents. The survey was conducted in English or Spanish depending on respondent preference. This national survey was conducted using NORC at the University of Chicago's AmeriSpeak probability-based sample. AmeriSpeak is designed to be representative of the U.S. household population. All data are weighted by age, gender, and race/ethnicity according to the most recent Census population statistics. The margin of error for the Hispanic/Latino sample is ± 6.84 percent.



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