COVID-19 Vaccines and Therapeutics Saved Millions of Lives, Enabled Faster Recovery Across the US

US biomedical innovation, tenacity and collaboration provided for the discovery, development and administration of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics across the US and the world with unprecedented speed. Their effectiveness and rapid availability saved millions of lives, prevented even more hospital stays, and enabled Americans to reconnect and get back to normal.

1. The benefits from COVID-19 vaccination began immediately. Based on federal government estimates, within the first seven months of the first COVID-19 vaccine being administered in the US, COVID-19 vaccines:
   - Helped to avert 1.38 million hospitalizations, reducing costs by $354 billion
   - Prevented 213,000 deaths
   - Slowed spread by avoiding an estimated 25.3 million cases

2. COVID-19 created significant work disruptions with costly consequences. During the first year of the pandemic in the US, COVID-19 caused $138 billion in lost work among US full-time workers.

3. Within the first year of widespread availability in the US, COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics generated substantial economic value: $371.6 billion in direct economic benefits from reduced deaths and an additional $933.1 billion in increased economic activity by reducing the need for spread mitigation strategies such as quarantines, lock downs and social distancing.

4. Antivirals to treat COVID-19 are estimated to have prevented 229,000 hospitalizations and saved more than $10 billion in medical costs.

5. The benefits of COVID-19 vaccines extend well into the future. Researchers estimate that the COVID-19 vaccines will generate $5 trillion in societal economic value through June 2024 in the US, including:
   - $1.27 trillion in value from lives saved, COVID-19 medical costs avoided and quality of life regained.
   - $3.73 trillion from returning to social and economic activity more quickly.
   - $1.9 trillion value in reduced prevalence of depression
   - $1.4 trillion value in increased US GDP
   - $54 billion value in avoided health care costs from deferring non-COVID medical care
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Compared with estimates of $16 TRILLION in pandemic-related societal costs for the US over the next decade, COVID-19 vaccines conservatively cut that by a third.\(^5\)

Reduced Medicare Costs & Lives Saved

The federal government and the private sector partnered closely together in the development, manufacturing, distribution and administration of vaccines – and society reaped tremendous benefits according to the US Department of Health and Human Services. Within the first six months of their availability, COVID-19 vaccines saved Medicare $2.6 billion by avoiding 107,000 COVID hospitalizations.\(^7\)

Vulnerable Populations, Health Disparities & Vaccinations Benefits

Older adults were most vulnerable to hospitalization and death from COVID-19 – and saw the most significant benefits from vaccination. From December 2020 through September 2021 alone, vaccination prevented 759,000 hospitalizations and 154,000 deaths among people aged 65 and older in the US.\(^8\)

Nearly 40% of people also reported delaying medical care for conditions not related to COVID-19 during the pandemic, including care for children. Vaccinated parents, however, were less likely to skip care for their children.\(^9\) That benefit was seen most particularly among non-White individuals and parents with lower education attainment and/or lower income levels.

Global Pandemic: Global Vaccination Benefits

The monumental benefits of COVID-19 vaccines extended globally, preventing at least 14 million deaths across 185 countries and territories in the first year of vaccination availability alone. In an unheard of public health achievement, more than 55% of the global population received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine within a year of the vaccine’s availability.\(^10\) These efforts helped reduce the emergence of additional variants and importation of COVID-19 cases.

Numbered Sources


Getting vaccinated is one of the most important ways we can protect ourselves and others from illness. Learn more at VaccINATION: www.fightinfectiousdisease.org/vaccination