



Dear Pandemic: lessons learned on the COVID-19 infodemic frontlines.

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COPSS-NISS COVID-19 Data Science Webinar Series

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“THOSE NERDY GIRLS” EXPLAIN THE PANDEMIC TO AMERICA

The Philadelphia Citizen

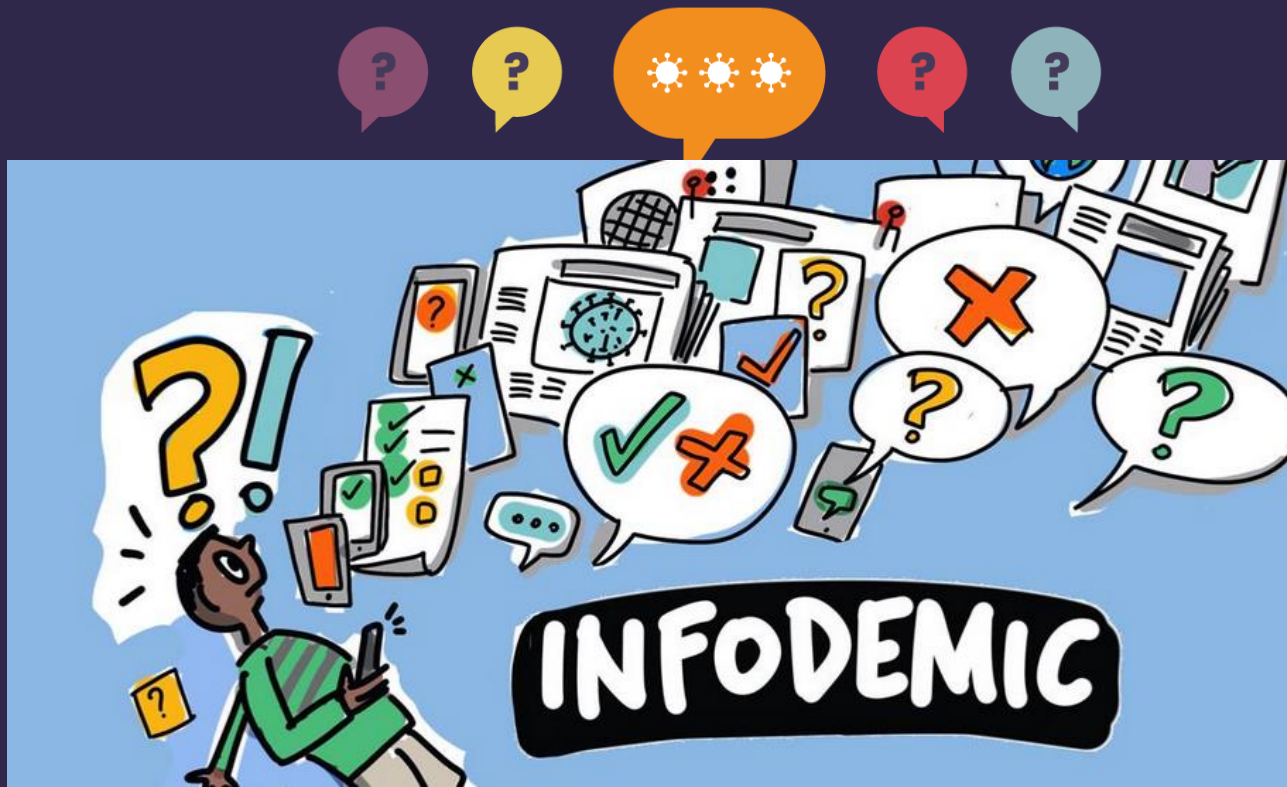
BY ROXANNE PATEL SHEPELAVY

JAN. 26, 2021



Stay safe, stay sane.

Dear Pandemic:



“An infodemic is an overabundance of information – some accurate and some not – occurring during an epidemic. It makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it” –World Health organization

Dear Pandemic Aims

1. To disseminate trustworthy, comprehensive, and timely scientific content about the pandemic to lay audiences.
2. To promote media and science literacy and information hygiene practices, equipping our readers to better manage the COVID-19 infodemic within their own networks.



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Dear Pandemic:

What we do

- 12-14 unique content posts week for the last 60+ weeks and counting—1000+ so far
- 30-min Facebook Live video Q&A each weekend
- 8 different channels
 - *Dear Pandemic* on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn; also our email newsletter and website.
 - *Querida Pandemia* on Facebook only (for now)
- We receive ~250 questions per week from readers



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Dear Pandemic:

Dear Pandemic guiding principles

- **Interdisciplinary approach.** It takes *all of us* to defeat a pandemic
- **Harm reduction model:** a little better is a little better
- **Lifting up the voices of women in science**
- **The power of the personal connection**



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Dear Pandemic:

Our real service

The power of the share button!




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Dear Pandemic:

Jaime Garland Garrigus

You are not just providing a critical educational service during the pandemic, you are inspiring girls everywhere to lean into data and science-nerdy is cool. You go girl!

Btw, a colleague of mine has been on the fence about getting vaccinated and I asked if I could send her some info...shared some DP screenshots and now she's totally geeking out on the nerdy girls and ready to schedule her vaccine appt. ❤️ you're changing and saving lives!

 Author

David Hague

Dear Pandemic, happy to! Been following your page for a while and you are all great! Keep up the good work giving people accurate scientific info on the pandemic with the occasional funny mixed in to keep things light (people need that). Appreciate you all!

Rachel Stevenson · 12:42

From one of your posts, I was inspired to enroll in the Novavax vaccine study. I am so grateful!

Fred Bell

Thanks for this post which even I found to make sense.

While I don't always understand some of the details, it is clear that you explain the intricacies to others. I don't have to understand it all because you people have built a level of trust, and it is this level of trust which helps us feel confident that the vaccines are overwhelmingly safe.

Like · Reply · Message · 12h



Ann McCarthy

Well we are SO grateful! I use references from Dear Pandemic in my clinical practice and to help my friends and family untangle so much information. You all are heroes!

FAQ categories

1. Risk assessment help.



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Dear Pandemic:

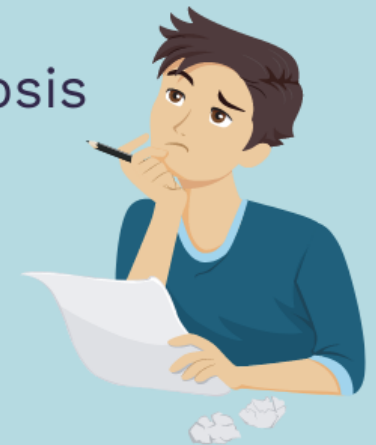


If we vaccinate 30 million people...

Over the next month, we expect based on NORMAL rates:

- ~12,000 will have a heart attack or stroke
- ~14,000 will have a new cancer diagnosis
- ~90 will be diagnosed with multiple sclerosis
- ~21,500 will die.

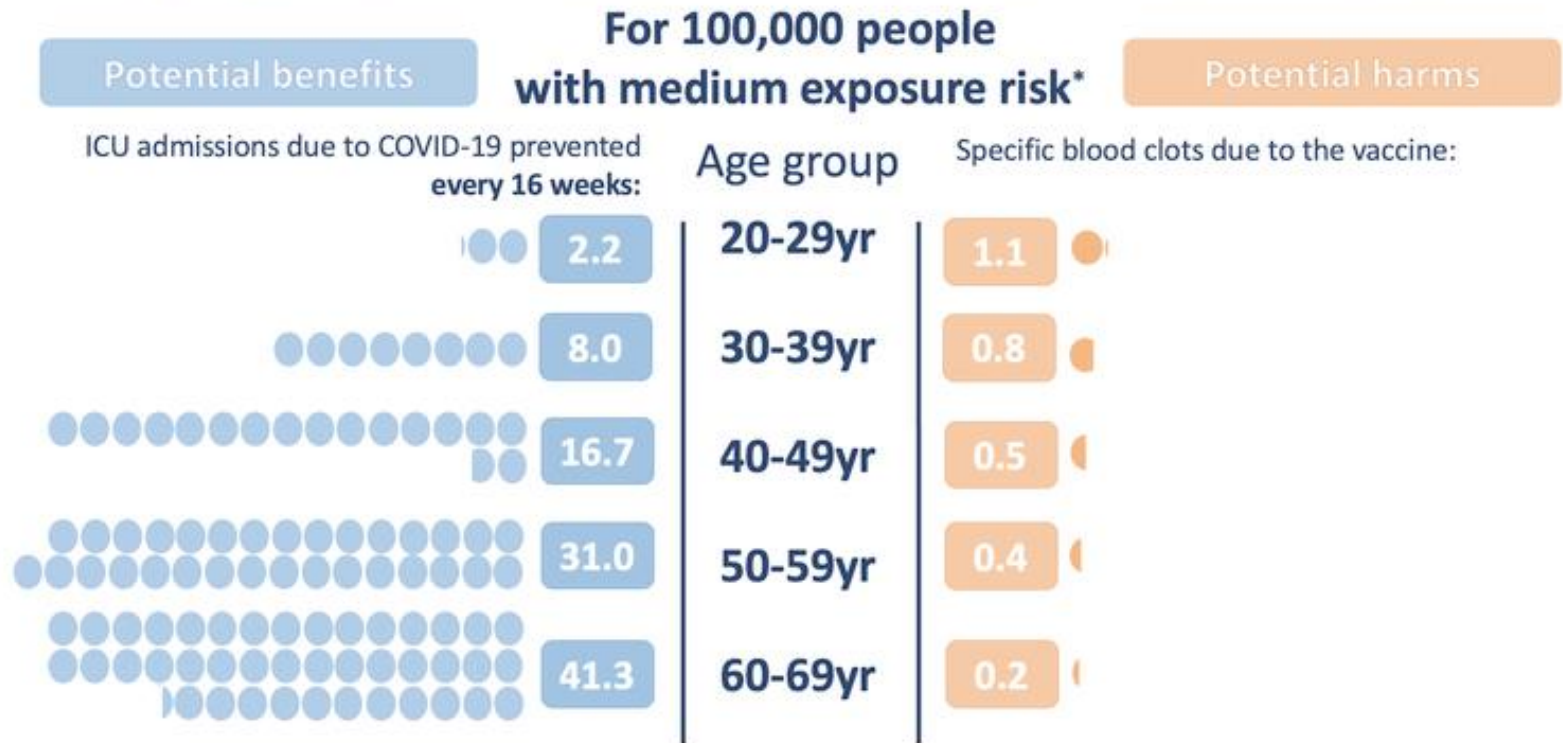
*These numbers are average U.S. population risk but would be even higher for older groups at higher priority for early vaccination.



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Dear Pandemic:

Weighing up the potential benefits and harms of the Astra-Zeneca COVID-19 vaccine



* Based on coronavirus incidence of 6 per 10,000 per day: roughly UK in February



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Dear Pandemic:

FAQ categories



1. Risk assessment help.
2. Help me apply general guidance to my situation.



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Dear Pandemic:

Get Specific

- Lists 10 examples of families in this situation and how the CDC guidance applies to them
- Most popular post ever:
 - 400,000 views
 - 85,000 engagements
 - 3,800 shares



FAQ categories



1. Risk assessment help.
2. Help me apply general guidance to my situation.
3. Special literacies: science, health, numeracy, and media.



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Dear Pandemic:

Increasing media and science literacy

DECEMBER 4, 2020

How do I fight fake news?

UNCERTAIN

A: Use
“Sandv

DECEMBER 8, 2020

What's up with shifting scientific guidance?

UNCERTAIN

A: S
Bew

OCTOBER 28, 2020

What are the hallmarks of high-quality reporting?

UNCERTAINTY AND MISINFORMATION

A: Look for the ABCs of ethical journalism:
Accountability; Balance; and Credibility

Lessons Learned

1. Trust is our currency
2. Fight the infodemic on its own turf
3. Be specific and practical
4. Make it painless



Stay safe, stay sane.

Dear Pandemic:

No
vaccine

Vaccine that
reduces disease
but not infection

Severe
disease

Moderate
disease

Mild
disease

Asymptomatic
infection



No
vaccine

Vaccine with same
efficacy against
disease as others
shown, but higher
efficacy against
infection



Note that there are fewer
asymptomatic infections
in the vaccinated group



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Dear Pandemic:

Where to learn more



www.dearpandemic.org



Facebook: www.facebook.com/dearpandemic



Twitter: www.twitter.com/dearpandemic



Instagram: www.instagram.com/Dear_Pandemic



Twice-weekly email newsletter:

<https://dearpandemic.org/subscribe/>



Weekly live Q&A on Facebook Live



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