

# Changing attitudes to vaccination after the COVID-19 pandemic could increase adult vaccination rates, improving health outcomes over the longer term

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- GSK-sponsored Kantar survey shows that people 50 years of age and older value good health and improved quality of life significantly more than financial security in a post-pandemic world.
- Public health messaging to encourage vaccination could be more successful if it focused on immune fitness rather than age.

Findings from a new survey by Kantar on behalf of GSK provides insights into the role that vaccination plays in health and wellbeing among people aged 50 years and older.

16,000 adults age 50 and older were surveyed across eight countries (USA, Italy, Spain, Germany, France, Brazil, Canada and Japan) on their attitudes to health and ageing. The study showed improved attitudes to vaccination due to COVID-19, with 44% ranking staying up to date on vaccines as important prior to the pandemic, rising to 65% after. Good health was significantly more important to this age group (ranked as highly important by 94%) than financial security (46%) or having an active family life (43%) for their quality of life over the next ten years.

The best way of reaching this group to encourage the promotion of good health is to focus on the fitness of their immune system, not their age. Nearly 50% of adults across the countries surveyed say they feel younger than their current chronological age. Among this group,

what they consider the start of “old age” increases with age; the older people become, the older “old” becomes.

While adults 50 years and older might feel physically younger than their age, when asked about the age at which they believe their immune system weakens, around 50% correctly recognised this to become most important from the 50s/ 60s and onward. However, only 20% of those surveyed felt “old age” begins in their 50s/ 60s. This indicates that people are aware of the increasing vulnerability of the immune system at specific ages – and may be able to apply that awareness to their own situation - in a way that they don’t necessarily relate to messaging on the risk in “older people”. Therefore, by shifting the conversation to the immune system, it may be possible to remove barriers presented by perceptions of what is “old age” leading to more impactful communications about vaccination and healthy ageing going forward.

According to those surveyed, adult vaccination rates can also be improved with clearer, more consistent information, reminders on when vaccinations are due and more conveniently located vaccination centres. While eight in ten of those surveyed reporting being vaccinated for COVID-19, only 19.8% believed they were up to date on recommended vaccines for adults. Across all countries, adults said they want better and clearer information on which vaccines are needed and why. Of note, adults in Spain, France and Japan also wanted to learn more about potential vaccine side effects.

Francesca Ceddia, Head of Global Medical Affairs at GSK Vaccines, stated:

By the end of this decade the number of people aged 60 years and older is expected to increase by more than a third, to 1.4 billion people worldwide. If adult vaccination coverage rates don’t improve we could see an increase in death and suffering caused by infectious disease in adults. This survey has shown us that good health is what adults 50+ rank as their #1 priority for ensuring quality of life. It has also shown us that the Covid-19 pandemic has helped to create a higher collective awareness about the vulnerability of our immune system and the very real benefits of vaccination. Most importantly, we have gained valuable insights into adults 50+ and the information they are looking for and the barriers that should be overcome.

Now it is on us in the public health space to listen and take action accordingly.

About the survey - In total, 16,000 people were surveyed from eight countries (Spain, Italy, France, Germany, Brazil, USA, Canada and Japan) with the goal of understanding the role that vaccination plays in the health and wellbeing among people age 50 and up. 2000 people over the age of 50 years old were surveyed in each country. The survey was conducted online during July and August 2021.

About GSK - GSK is a science-led global healthcare company with a special purpose: to help people do more, feel better, live longer. GSK is the leading manufacturer of vaccines globally. For further information please visit [www.gsk.com](http://www.gsk.com)

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Except in Japan, where only 23% of respondents felt younger

WHO. Plan for the Decade of Healthy Aging.

[www.who.int/docs/default-source/decade-of-healthy-ageing/final...](http://www.who.int/docs/default-source/decade-of-healthy-ageing/final...)

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