Rhode Island COVID-19 Response Talking Points

Primary message: PROTECT YOUR HOUSEHOLD

Messages for everyone
• Find everything you need to know about the disease, how to prevent its spread, and what to do if you have it at covid.ri.gov/prevention.
• As with many viruses, there are several variants of COVID-19. Some are much more concerning than others. While we expect variants, it’s more important now than ever that we use all available tools to stop this pandemic.
• If you have symptoms of COVID-19, isolate at home, call your doctor, and get tested.
• If you test positive for COVID-19 and are eligible for treatment, get treated right away. Talk to a doctor to learn more.
  - You may also be eligible for support to help you isolate, including food, housing, cash for essential supplies, and employment letters. Learn more at covid.ri.gov/whattodo.

Messages for fully vaccinated people
If you’re fully vaccinated against COVID-19:
• You can go back to doing most of the things you did before the pandemic.
• You only need to wear a mask in some settings. Find the full list of settings where you still need to wear a mask at covid.ri.gov/prevention.
• You may not have to quarantine. Learn more at covid.ri.gov/whattodo.

Messages for unvaccinated people
If you’re not fully vaccinated against COVID-19, protect your household in these ways:
• Get vaccinated. The vaccines are safe, highly effective against serious illness, and reduce the risk of infecting others.
• Get tested every week. Sign up for a free test online at portal.ri.gov or by calling 401-222-8022.
• With COVID-19 variants of concern in Rhode Island, it’s even more important to get vaccinated, get tested weekly, wear a mask, and watch your distance indoors near anyone you don’t live with.
• Outdoors, continue to wear a mask in crowded places or during activities where you’re in close contact with other people who are not fully vaccinated. Close contact means you’ve been within six feet of someone with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more in a 24-hour period.
• Stay home and apart from others if you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or if you are in quarantine or isolation.

Key vaccine messages
• No steps involving safety were skipped during the COVID-19 vaccine development process.
  - All COVID-19 vaccines were tested in clinical trials involving tens of thousands of people to make sure they meet safety standards and protect adults of different ages, races, and ethnicities.
  - COVID-19 vaccines were held to the same rigorous safety standards as other vaccines.
• Vaccines often cause our immune systems to respond in a way that shows the vaccine is working. This is healthy, normal, and expected.
  - You may experience a sore arm, headache, fever, or body aches, but they should go away within a few days.
  - The effects of COVID-19 are much worse than these mild to moderate reactions that people sometimes have to the vaccine.

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