

An Untold Story

Category: Unvaccinated

written by Anonymous | September 29, 2021

I am unvaccinated. Am I the only such first-person voice here? I am not an anti-vaxxer or anti-masker. I am not anti-science or anti-social. What I am is a member of a neglected minority in the U.S.: those with underlying health conditions.

From the outset, it's been an accepted fact that a percentage of the population would not be eligible for some COVID vaccines. By not approving any of the conventional vaccines in use elsewhere in the world, the U.S. has increased that percentage significantly. By extension, the billions of people worldwide who received conventional COVID vaccines are, as far as the U.S. is concerned, unvaccinated.

Unlike the stereotype of the unvaccinated, I go above and beyond the most stringent guidelines, living in virtual solitary confinement and double masking and maintaining strict social distance when I have to go out. Contrary to the stigma attached to the unvaccinated, I do not pose the slightest risk to anyone else, only they to me: Anyone unmasked—vaccinated or unvaccinated, including children under 12—can be a silent carrier.

I *want* a COVID vaccine. I've had every vaccine in the book, from the first polio vaccine in the 1950s to rabies to yellow fever, so to now be among the unvaccinated is incredibly ironic. Over the years, however, I've accumulated a number of severe allergies and conditions that require me to avoid one medication in favor of another. Tylenol instead of Advil, tetracycline instead of penicillin. This is standard medical practice, but when it comes to mandating *the* COVID vaccine these protocols are ignored.

Given my history of anaphylaxis and heart surgery, my doctor and I decided I should wait for a conventional, inactivated, whole-virus vaccine to be available. I've received them all my life, including this year's flu shot, with no adverse reactions. We continue to wait but are becoming discouraged as the government continues its current narrow-minded course. I understand the frustration of frontline workers—how many millions more Americans could we get on board if we added conventional vaccines to the mix?

So sign me up for a COVID vaccine, "a" being the operative word. Give me a choice of options, so I can select one consistent with my medical history. Yes, I could go across the border to Mexico, where Covaxin is available—from one of the world's largest and most respected vaccine manufacturers—but that would still not confer the coveted title of "vaccinated" here in the U.S.

At the very least, I hope Americans will adjust their stereotype of the unvaccinated until the FDA allows access to *appropriate* medical treatment for all who seek it.

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