Here's what you need to know about myocarditis: Suggested talking points

- **Myocarditis, or inflammation of the heart, is most commonly caused by a viral infection.**
    - Bacteria, parasites, fungi, chemicals, and certain medications can also cause myocarditis.
    - Symptoms of myocarditis include chest pain, shortness of breath, and rapid or irregular heart rhythms. While some cases may be severe, most resolve themselves without permanent complications.
    - Cases of myocarditis after vaccination have occurred in less than 1 percent of people, and those cases were usually mild. Among vaccine-induced myocarditis patients, 2 percent went to the ICU and nearly all recovered fully.

- **A COVID-19 infection is much more likely to cause myocarditis than a COVID-19 vaccine, and those cases are typically more severe.**
    - Among patients who experienced myocarditis after a viral infection, half went to the ICU, a quarter did not fully recover, and up to 22 percent died.
    - A 2022 study found that people who contracted COVID-19 were seven times more likely to develop myocarditis than those who received the vaccine.
    - The benefits of getting the COVID-19 vaccine outweigh any potential risks because getting vaccinated reduces the risk of getting myocarditis after a COVID-19 infection.

- **Staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccines is a safe and effective way to protect yourself from myocarditis.**
    - Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 also reduces the risk of hospitalization, death, and long COVID.
    - The updated COVID-19 vaccine is recommended for everyone 6 months and older.
    - Schedule an appointment today near you at Vaccines.gov.

Here's what you need to know about myocarditis: Frequently asked questions

1. **What causes myocarditis?**

Myocarditis, or inflammation of the heart, is typically caused by a viral infection. Bacteria, parasites, fungi, chemicals, and certain medications can also cause myocarditis.

In very rare cases, some people develop myocarditis after receiving a COVID-19 vaccine, but these cases are usually mild. A viral infection like COVID-19 is much more likely to cause myocarditis than a vaccine. Staying up to date on vaccinations reduces your risk of developing myocarditis from COVID-19.

2. **Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe?**

Yes. COVID-19 vaccines have been rigorously tested and monitored over the past three years and have been determined to be safe. The benefits of vaccination outweigh any potential risks because staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations reduces your risk of myocarditis, hospitalization, death, and long COVID.

The CDC recommends the updated COVID-19 vaccine for everyone 6 months and older.

3. **How can I protect myself from myocarditis?**

Myocarditis is typically caused by a viral infection, so protecting yourself from viruses is the best way to prevent it.

We're currently in respiratory virus season, and staying up to date on this season's vaccinations reduces your risk of severe illness and viral complications like myocarditis. The CDC recommends the updated COVID-19 vaccine and this season's flu vaccine for everyone 6 months and older. The CDC also recommends the RSV vaccine for people who are 32 to 36 weeks' pregnant and people 60 and older. Visit Vaccines.gov to schedule your updated COVID-19 vaccine, seasonal flu shot, and RSV vaccine (if you're eligible) as soon as possible.

Wash your hands frequently and wear a high-quality, well-fitting mask in crowded spaces. The CDC recommends masking indoors on planes, trains, buses, and boats and at transportation hubs. N95 and KN95 masks offer the best protection. Learn more about the types of masks and how to use them from the CDC.