



Fellow community members,

We are local physicians who live and work here in our community. Many of you may know our names or know us personally, as we may have taken care of you or your loved ones over the years. You see us at church, the grocery store, and at social and sporting events. Our children go to school together. We care deeply about our community.

We are all extremely different human beings who vary in our backgrounds, experiences and political opinions. We root against each other's sports teams. We vote for different candidates and different political parties. One thing we have in common, however, is frustration and despair about our current COVID-19 vaccination situation.

Some of us were among the first people in the area to become infected with COVID-19, and most of us were the first to roll up our sleeves and get vaccinated. We have spent the last 18 months taking care of people in our community, at times risking our lives and personal health, and risking carrying infection home to our own families. We have seen firsthand how this virus has taken many, many lives. We have watched it destabilize our local and global economies. We have watched it disrupt lives, education and our way of life.

For several months following the rollout of the vaccine, we saw a decrease in the number of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths. However, within the last few weeks, we have once again seen a remarkable increase in these numbers. We are experiencing the dreadful feeling, "Here we go again."

The COVID-19 vaccines are a modern medical miracle. Fundamentally, the vaccines were developed leveraging previously established scientific methods and technology. The support for the vaccines was brought about by the Trump Administration. After the presidential election, the Biden Administration continued the massive rollout and financial support. Both of these efforts have made vaccine availability to Americans among the greatest in the world. Similar to the efforts that won World War II and put human footprints on the moon, it is something to be proud of as an American.

What is NOT to be proud of, however, is that we are now currently suffering from massive disinformation. It is heartbreaking to see lies and deception from all sides of the political spectrum costing people their lives.

The vaccines currently available have been administered to billions of people around the globe. There are no vaccines of any kind that are 100% safe, nor 100% effective, but REAL statistics show that the risks of these vaccines are extremely small and the effectiveness is very high. Consider the history of other deadly diseases halted by vaccines. The precedent has been set and the answer to this tragedy is within our grasp if only we choose to use it!

Further waves of infection are entirely preventable. Current statistics show that the large majority of Americans dying of COVID-19 are UNVACCINATED. We see and are impacted by this in our own hospitals today. Ignorance and disinformation are, quite literally, killing our friends and neighbors.

We strenuously urge you to please listen to us, your physicians, regardless of your political affiliation and your trust or distrust of government and politicians. We spend our days and our careers taking care of our community. Please, PLEASE, sign up and get fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Even if you don't feel that you are personally at high risk, unvaccinated individuals will almost certainly eventually develop COVID-19 infection. When you become infected, you will spread the virus to others, most likely before you even realize you have it. For your family, neighbors and community, please do the responsible thing to prevent the sickness and death we are seeing all around us. While we are honored to be considered "healthcare heroes," we would much prefer to simply see all of our community members protect each other by following our advice to get vaccinated.

Sincerely,

McLennan County Medical Society

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