

So, I am continually amazed, or maybe dumbfounded is a better word, as to why folks are still reluctant to take the Covid -19 Vaccine. I had hoped that even the naysayers would get on board once the FDA approved the vaccine last month. I started really thinking back on my own experiences recently and tried to formulate a timeline of the vaccines I had received, and while some may think differently, I think I turned out OK. I tracked my vaccines to try and understand why the hesitancy of so many people refusing the Covid-19 vaccine.

Now I was born in the 60's and I remember full well taking shots before we started school. Those shots were mandatory and guess what, I don't remember any real adverse effects to any of my kindergarten or elementary school classmates. By the time I was 10 years old, a vaccine for Mumps, Measles and Rubella had been created and was recommended for school age children. Again, I don't remember any adverse outcomes.

If you fast forward a bit to the 1980's and my early career days in healthcare, we were required to take the Hepatitis vaccine and you know what, we were better protected against another very infectious and deadly disease. At that same time, I was taking my induction physical exam to become an Army officer and guess what...more shots. They didn't ask me if I wanted them, they just told me, in a not so nice way, I was getting them. I never deployed overseas, but I know many who did and getting vaccines for those warriors was never a question. And now, as a Rotarian, one of our most important initiatives is fighting disease. With over 1.2 million rotary members form over 35,000 clubs globally, the focus remains the global eradication of Polio, another vaccine that no one seemed to even blink at.

At Troy Regional, our ICU remains full of unvaccinated patients on the ventilator. The team here works tirelessly day after day to deliver life preserving care but unfortunately, it is sometimes not enough. The ICU capacity around the state and even in the southeast region of the US has been above capacity for months now. That may not seem like a big deal, but when the ICU is constantly full of Covid patients, we have no rooms available for those who present with other emergent conditions. And with all the other hospitals in the state living with similar conditions, our transfers are often to out of state facilities.

We continue to administer Covid vaccines at Troy Regional each Friday from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. with no appointment required. Please do our team and our community a favor by taking the vaccine. We need your support, please do your part.

Spread the word, not the virus.

Rick Smith, FACHE  
Chief Executive Officer  
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