**Get Ready – Vaccines are Coming**

The calvary is coming. There will be up to seven vaccines available by spring with the first arrivals probably by late December. We are currently in another surge of COVID-19. Deaths seem random and occur at all ages even in the very young. Vaccines are the answer to stopping this pandemic and getting back to our normal lives but they only work if we all take them. With all the confusion and misinformation about vaccines, people are wondering if they are safe.

**Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?**

The current information says yes. Vaccines must be proven to be safe and effective before they are given to people and the COVID-19 vaccine is no different. Over 70,000 people took part in the studies of the first two vaccines that will probably be released. Most side effects to vaccines are seen within the first 2 months, well within the length of the clinical studies. Side effects have been mild and include fever, fatigue, headaches and pain at the injection site, which are similar to those experienced when receiving the flu vaccine. Yes, there is always the possibility of long-term effects and it can take a year or two before becoming apparent. Pregnant women and people with chronic diseases were not included in the trials.

This has been the most transparent and open vaccine development in history. An independent group of expert physicians, scientists and consumer representatives, named the Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee, will review the data on safety and effectiveness. They will then make their recommendation to the FDA. After the FDA makes its determination, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices will review the available data before making vaccine recommendations to the CDC. All the safeguards are in place.

**How could they make the vaccines so fast and still be safe?**

All the usual safety steps were taken in the development of these vaccines. The steps were done at the same time instead of one step at a time in order to speed the process. Nothing was left out. There were no compromises in the process.

This was possible because the Federal government took away the financial risk by paying for the research so that the pharmaceutical companies could complete the clinical trials quickly. The government also believed that the vaccines would be effective and paid the pharmaceutical companies in advance to produce the millions of doses needed. This eliminated many months of production.

In addition, this technology has been in development since 1989 so it is not new and researchers were able to build this vaccine off the earlier research.

**What next?**

There are still many questions yet to be answered. We are keeping a close eye on the medical research and should know more about the risks in the next several weeks. Stay tuned. I am confident that the vaccine will be safe and I will be in line.

Protect yourself, protect your family and end this pandemic. Get vaccinated.

Join me for a webinar about the vaccines and ask any questions! RSVP below