Twitter Thread by Ryan Knopp

Ryan Knopp
@KnoppRyan

Happy day for me. Several people I care a lot about got the COVID vaccine today, overcoming some hesitancy. What do I say to my patients who are unsure about the vaccine? This:

1. Talk to me. I'm happy to spend as much time with you as you need to discuss COVID and the vaccine. As it should be with any trusted primary care physician.

2. Over 95% of doctors got the vaccine as soon as it was available to them, and if you focus on physicians who actually care for COVID patients it is nearly 100%.

3. I am vaccinated, as is all my family including my 14 and 16 year olds. With no hesitation.

4. No corners were cut in the development of these vaccines, only red tape was cut. I'm happy to discuss how they were made and how they work.

5. At this point in the vaccine journey, we not only have great studies pointing toward their effectiveness and safety, but now we have real world experience in giving them to hundreds of millions of people over the last 9 months affirming their safety.

6. COVID is real. COVID is serious. COVID is unpredictable. The risk of the virus will always trump the risk of the vaccine. We as doctors know this after battling the virus for 1.5 years now.

7. In my own practice, the score right now is COVID 100: Vaccine 0. I literally have about 100 stories to tell you of my own patients who have either died, been on ventilators, been hospitalized, lived on the verge of being hospitalized for weeks, texting me at midnight about

low oxygen levels or chest pain, or now have COVID long haul symptoms. I have absolutely zero patients who have had a bad outcome from the vaccine other than brief side effects. Seeing our hospitals fill up, not being able to care for our patients in normal ways is so sad for us.

8. That all being said, your questions/skepticism are OK and need to be addressed. To that end, nothing we do in medicine has zero risk. Every medication or vaccine has risk. But I like to use this example to illustrate why we in medicine are so

comfortable with the vaccine:

In teens, it seems the COVID vaccine carries a very small risk of myocarditis or heart muscle inflammation after the second dose, to the tune of about 50 cases per a million doses given to boys, and about 12 cases in girls. Typically it is mild and resolves in 1-2 weeks. BUT . .

Teens who get COVID disease get myocarditis much more frequently, anywhere from 500-3000 cases per a million. Not even a contest. The risk of the virus always beats the risk of the vaccine. We find this line of logic applies to really any known negligible risk from the vaccine.

9. I direct patients to trusted resources that all physicians use, but a unique strategy I use at times is to give patients printed copies of Up To Date advice on COVID vaccines and treatment. I say “If you come to me for ANY medical problem, you want me to be up to date . .

Meaning I know the standard of care from experts and evidence-based medicine. Across all fields of medicine, the resource called “Up To Date” is our “Bible” for that, a source all doctors trust. Here you will read about the safety and effectiveness of the COVID vaccines,

and why we WILL treat you with monoclonal antibody therapy if you get COVID and are at risk, but also why we will NOT treat you with ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine at this point. You want me to be Up To Date on COVID like you do all your medical problems.”

10. Lastly and most importantly: I CARE DEEPLY FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY. I ALWAYS HAVE. I ALWAYS WILL. THAT IS WHAT MOTIVATES ME TO SHARE THIS ADVICE WITH YOU TODAY. I JUST ASK THAT YOU TRUST ME NOW AS YOU HAVE FOR ALL YOUR OTHER HEALTHCARE NEEDS.