Twitter Thread by Edward Nirenberg

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So here's the thing

I block people who have obviously bad intentions

This person came to my post with conspiracies and made the contradictory claim that the vaccines in question were both more reactogenic in black people and also not tested in them (go figure that one out)



after politely linking to a guidance from NASEM on the equitable distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine I was given a conspiracy theory about the CIA's involvement in this and the usual line of us not being able to trust pharmaceutical companies

Conspiracy theories aside, I would agree: pharmaceutical companies have violated our trust in the past and it's a problem. The most obvious example is the opioid crisis.

Here's why that comparison does not apply here:

The motive of profit is fundamentally different. People who have chronic pain can be reliant or addicted to opioids and will do anything to get them. Even if regular boosters are needed, the dosing for a vaccine is just not the same.

Vaccines in general are not the big money makers for pharmaceutical companies. They are public health interventions. This one will also likely be subsidized by the government (at least if expert recommendations are adhered to) which further weakens the argument

The other thing is: from the perspective of the pharmaceutical company, do you want to be responsible for putting out one of the most high profile and closely scrutinized products probably in the history of the industry only to have it fail or harm people...

Irreparably tarnishing your reputation?

No. Of course not.

The results being reported by the pharmaceutical companies are preliminary, and we don't have full access to them. But the data itself has been reviewed by a DSMB. This is an Independent group of experts.

They do not have a financial incentive to lie about the results, make them appear better than they are, or anything of the sort. That is literally one of the requirements for being in a DSMB. Their decisions, together with regulatory bodies' govern transition through...

the clinical trial process.

We should keep being skeptical, we should demand transparency, and we should wait for the full data.

But we shouldn't resort to conspiracy thinking. It's lazy and it's uninteresting and it's not worth the time taken to come up with it.

I'd also add that given the syndemic vulnerabilities experienced by black people (and other people of diverse backgrounds), there are few things I could think of that would be worse than withholding a COVID-19 vaccine that we already know works out of poorly founded

quasi-theoretical concerns about biological differences, as this would only serve to widen those inequities.

Also if you bother to read the post you will see multiple peer-reviewed studies supporting the claims made, as well as industry guidances from the FDA.