

We are experiencing a situation that I never thought would happen. We are having extreme difficulty getting people to sign up for the COVID-19 vaccination clinics that we have at the hospital. We started to notice this trend when we were required to use the state system to register to receive the vaccine. The way it works is that if you would like to receive the vaccine, you register through the state system on line. When we get ready to have a vaccination clinic, we then send out invitations to a number of people and see what kind of a response we get. If we have more vaccine available than we requests for it, we send out additional invitations. Lately, it seems that no matter how many invitations that we send out, we still have more vaccine than people that want it. We see the same thing happening in the urban counties of Nebraska as well. It appears that the state is going to simplify their system next week. I hope that helps.

I am extremely concerned that we have a population of people in the 20 to 50 year age group that are reluctant to receive the vaccine. I am not sure why this is the case. I think that a great deal of reliable information has been made available demonstrating that the vaccine is safe. I also believe that the risks of receiving the vaccine are much less than the possible long term effects of being infected with the COVID-19 virus.

I am an old country boy and every year we vaccinated our cattle and horses, not because it was required by anyone, but because it was the right thing to do. We knew how devastating it would be if we ended up getting our herd infected with something we should have vaccinated for. Our entire herd could be quarantined and possibly destroyed because of this.

The same thing is true of receiving the COVID-19 vaccine. We should receive it because it is the right thing to do. We receive it not only to protect ourselves, but to protect those in our communities and our households. I'm not sure I could live with myself if I were responsible for knowingly causing someone to become infected with the COVID-19 virus. It's true that many of those that become infected have a mild case of the disease. But that is not always what happens. Some people are sick for months. Some end up with a disease that effects their entire body.

The doctors that study infectious diseases for a living are all saying that Nebraska is going to have another spike in cases primarily due to two factors. The new, more virulent mutations of the virus are in the state and because the very people that are spreading the disease are not getting vaccinated. The hospitalizations in Nebraska are rising already and these hospitalized patients are much younger than the patients hospitalized in December.

I beg of you, get the shot. It is easy, it is free, and it is the right thing to do for your family, your community and for yourself. I think we all want to go back to doing things the way we used to. The more people that get vaccinated, the sooner that will happen.