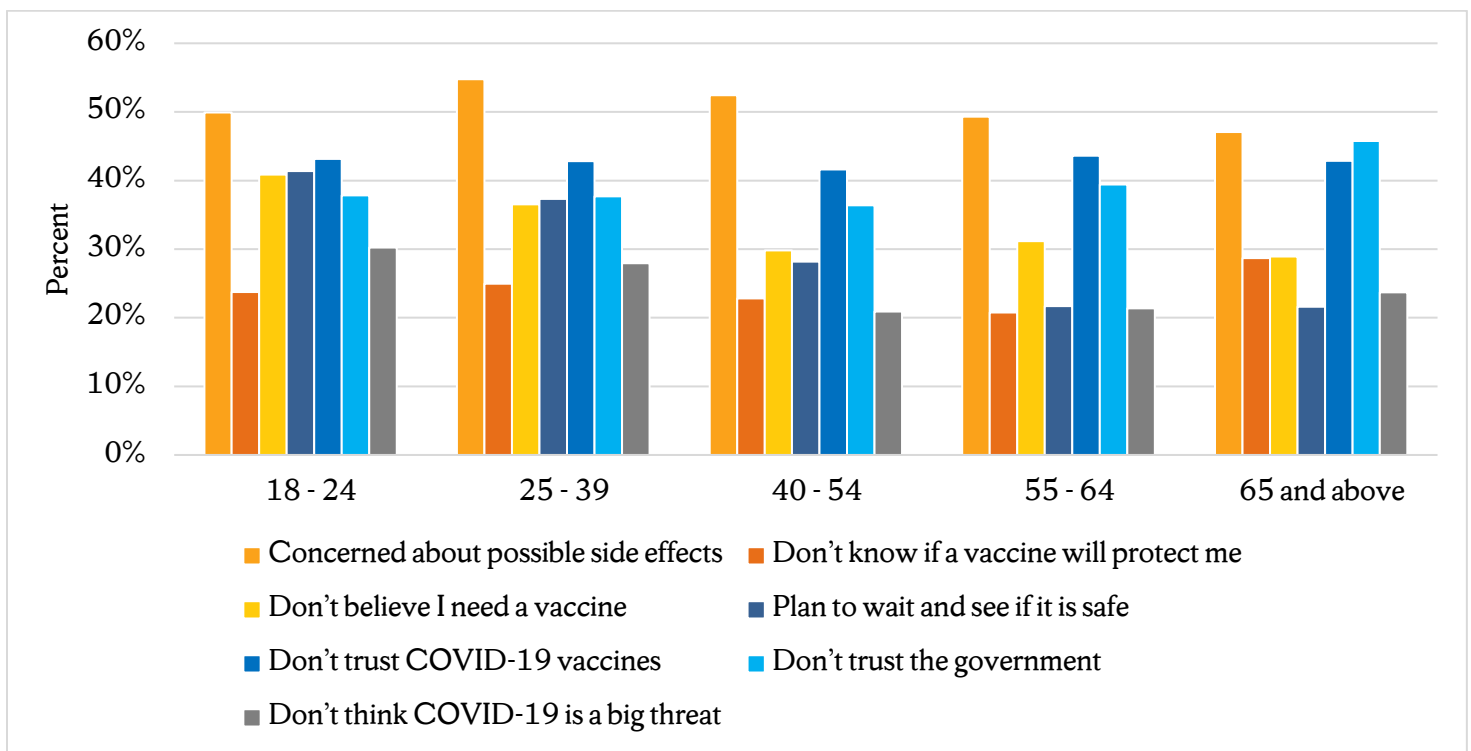


## Reported Reasons for Avoiding the COVID-19 Vaccine Vary by Age

Kelsey Wilber

Despite various efforts by governments, businesses, and health care providers, a large share of the U.S. population remains resistant to getting the COVID-19 vaccine. As of early-December 2021, [nearly 83% of the U.S. adult population](#) had received at least one vaccine dose, leaving over 44 million adults unvaccinated. Understanding why people refuse the vaccine is important for tailoring interventions to improve vaccination rates. Figure 1 shows the common reasons for not wanting the COVID-19 vaccine by age group, reported in a national survey conducted from September 29 to October 11, 2021. Concerns about potential side effects were the most common reason provided across all age groups but concerns about side effects appear to decline with age. Among ages 18 to 64, the second most common reason provided was distrust of the vaccine. Among those ages 65 and older, the second most common reason provided was distrust of the government, followed closely by distrust of the vaccine. Ultimately, interventions focused on addressing concerns about vaccine side effects are unlikely to increase vaccination rates among those who distrust the vaccine or the government. Instead, tackling COVID-19 misinformation is critical for increasing uptake.



**Figure 1: Reported Reasons for Avoiding COVID-19 Vaccinations Vary by Age Group**

Data Source: U.S. Census Household Pulse Survey Data, as of September 29 – October 11, 2021

Notes: Percentages are unweighted. Respondents had the option to select more than one response, so percentage totals do not add to 100.

### About the Author

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