



The BMJ

Cite this as: *BMJ* 2021;372:n841<http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n841>

Published: 29 March 2021

Sixty seconds on . . . vaccine bribes

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What's on offer?

Doughnut giant Krispy Kreme is offering “sweet support” to Americans who protect themselves against SARS-CoV-2 by giving a free glazed doughnut to anyone who provides proof of having had a job.

That's a lot of sugar glaze

The company's marketing—I mean, generosity—doesn't stop there. Glossy, sugar coated, deep fried rings of dough are being dropped off at some US vaccination centres for staff delivering the vaccines.

Aren't doughnuts one reason so many have died of covid?

Uhhh. Well, you could say that. Public Health England has estimated that a BMI of 35 to 40 could increase the chance of dying from covid-19 by 40%. The World Obesity Federation has found that covid-19 death rates are 10 times higher in countries where more than half of the adult population is classified as overweight.¹

What's the science?

It's down to disturbed metabolism, according to Stephen O'Rahilly of the University of Cambridge. Too much fat and it goes to the wrong places, like the liver and skeletal muscle, leading to high blood insulin, increased inflammatory cytokines, and a reduction of adiponectin which protects the lungs.²

Any other offers out there?

In the UK there's been speculation that pubs may only serve customers who've been vaccinated. Opponents of the idea say this would discriminate against those who can't have the vaccine on health grounds and gives false reassurance that vaccination eliminates the risk of transmission.

Surely being given the vaccine is reward enough?

You'd hope so, and the word certainly seems to be spreading. Preliminary findings from University College London's Virus Watch study suggest that 86% of the one in 10 adults who were unsure about having the vaccine or planned to refuse it in December 2020 have now changed their minds.³

1 Wise J. Covid-19: Highest death rates seen in countries with most overweight populations. *BMJ* 2021;372:n623. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n623 pmid: 33664055

2 Mahase E. Covid-19: Why are age and obesity risk factors for serious disease? *BMJ* 2020;371:m4130. doi: 10.1136/bmj.m4130 pmid: 33106243

3 Moberly T. Covid-19: Vaccine hesitancy fell after vaccination programme started. *BMJ* 2021;372:n837. doi: 10.1136/bmj.n837 pmid: 33771777

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