



Knowing that COVID-19 is still killing people and after seeing other people getting vaccinated and doing fine, I made the decision to get it myself.

- CHRISTIAN

My name is Christian. I am 18 years old and from Congo. When I first heard about COVID-19, I was still in Congo at the time. There, COVID-19 stopped us from going to school. We had to stay at home and were forced to always wear masks. I came to the U.S. during the pandemic. In both countries, the U.S. and Congo, you have rules to follow, but in Congo you are forced to follow the rules and the police disturb and attack you whenever they please, making you live in constant fear. Here in the U.S., the government takes care of its people. When I first heard about the COVID-19 vaccine, I honestly wasn't happy about it. It was still so new and scary. Plus, at the time, I was surrounded by many refugees who told me if I rejected getting vaccinated against COVID-19 that it would negatively affect my refugee status and I would get sent back to Africa. However, after seeing that many other countries were promoting the vaccine, I understood it was nothing to be afraid of. Before getting my first COVID-19 shot, I was still fearful because many of my friends were against it saying it was not good.

However, knowing that COVID-19 is still killing people and after seeing other people getting vaccinated and doing fine, I made the decision to get it myself. My friends who were against it became suddenly curious to know from me how it went to determine if they would do it or not. I am fully vaccinated now. My family is fully vaccinated, too. Now only some of my Congolese friends are waiting to get their second shot. The doctor who gave me my first shot warned me about possible symptoms but gave me good advice in what to do in case I experienced them. He told me to put cold water on the spot where I got the shot and to drink a lot of water. That's exactly what I did, and it worked! I was only sick the first two days after my first shot and only sick one day after my second shot. Being around a lot of people in school and other places means you need to stay protected. This is why I also choose to wear a mask. By doing so, I show how much I care about the health of those around me.

