

Fauci: We'll Get Back to Normal Gradually After Vaccine; You Don't Know How Effective Vaccine Is for You

By [Melanie Arter](#) | November 16, 2020 | 10:22am EST

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(CNSNews.com) – Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease and a member of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, said Sunday that if most of the U.S. is vaccinated against the coronavirus in the 2nd or 3rd quarter of 2021, we'll be able to get back to normal gradually, but those who are vaccinated won't be able to stop all social distancing, because they don't know how effective the vaccine is for them.

When asked during an interview with CNN's "State of the Union with Jake Tapper" when people will be able to safely gather for family events, Fauci said, "You know, it depends on a number of factors, Jake. For example, we have vaccines now. The first one that came out was highly effective. I anticipate that the second one likely will be comparable. You never can tell until you see the data, but would be comparable. That is great, but we have to get people to take the vaccine.



Dr. Anthony Fauci, Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, National Institutes of Health arrives to testify during a House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis hearing in Washington, DC, on September 23, 2020. (Photo by ALEX EDELMAN/POOL/AFP via Getty Images)

"So, if we get the overwhelming majority of people taking the vaccine, and you have, on the one hand, an effective vaccine, on the other hand, a high degree of uptake of the vaccine, we could start getting things back to relative normal as we get into the second and third quarter of the year, where people can start thinking about doing things that were too dangerous just months ago, but we have got to put all of those things together," Fauci said.

"We can't just wish it happening. We have got to get the vaccine. It has got to be deployed, and we

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can't abandon fundamental public health measures. You can approach a degree of normality, while still doing some fundamental public health things that synergize with the vaccine to get us back to normal," the director said.

"So, not until the second or third quarter of 2021, though? Christmas is probably not going to be possible?" Tapper asked.

"Yes, I'm -- well, I think that, if we get most of the country vaccinated in the second, third quarter of the year, and the vaccine continues to prove its efficacy, and people adhere to those fundamental measures, I think we can start approaching the degree -- it's not going to be a light switch, Jake," Fauci said.

"We are not going to turn it on and off, going from where we are to completely normal. It's going to be a gradual accrual of more normality as the weeks and the months go by, as we get well into 2021," he said.

When asked whether the Pfizer vaccine, which is considered 90 percent effective, is safe for kids and whether it's been tested on kids, Fauci said, "No, not yet. What we do -- and this is not an unusual situation -- is that, once you have a vaccine shown to be safe and effective in an adult, you can go back and do phase one and phase two trials in children, and then do what is called bridging it, namely, using the immunogenicity data to show that it's comparable responses in children, but it's safe.

"And the reason we do that is that children are vulnerable, and you always got to make sure that you're dealing with a safe and effective vaccine before you even think about putting it into children," he said.

"You want to get the children to get it as quickly as you possibly can. You don't want to deprive them of access to it, but you want to make sure you're safe when you're dealing with a vulnerable population such as children. That is standard, what we do with almost all vaccines," Fauci added.

Tapper asked Fauci whether people once vaccinated can take off their masks, won't have to socially distance, and can go about their lives as before.

"I would recommend that that is not the case. I would recommend you have an added area of protection. Obviously, with a 90-plus percent effective vaccine, you could feel much more confident, but I would recommend to people to not abandon all public health measures just because you have been vaccinated, because even though, for the general population, it might be 90 to 95 percent effective, you don't necessarily know, for you, how effective it is," he said.

"So, when I get vaccinated, which I hope to when it becomes my turn to get vaccinated, I'm not going to abandon completely public health measures. I could feel more relaxed, in essentially not having the stringency of it that we have right now, but I think abandoning it completely would not be a good idea," Fauci said.

"Because 5 to 10 percent of the people that get immunized, it will not be effective for. So, they might actually get the virus if they just completely let down their guard," Tapper said.

"Right," Fauci said.

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