Vaccination makes everyone safer

When I was given the opportunity to get the COVID-19 vaccine, I was elated. A weight was lifted from my shoulders knowing that I had taken a step to protect myself, my family and members of my



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community. Everyone 12 years old and older now has that opportunity, and I encourage all who are eligible to take advantage and get vaccinated.

Early in the pandemic, news of severe illness and death seemed like a constant. At the time, we had only nonpharmaceutical interventions like wearing a mask, washing our hands and social distancing to protect ourselves. Now we have multiple safe and effective vaccines with ample supply.

Many people feel that getting vaccinated is a personal choice, and I agree with them. But I firmly believe it's the right choice in this situation. Getting vaccinated does so much more than just protect you. It protects your loved ones, those who cannot get vaccinated and our community as a whole. It also helps our economy open up and stay open with healthy employees and patrons. Vaccinating makes everyone safer.

COVID is real; sometimes it is mild with no symptoms, but sometimes it is severe and fatal. With safe, effective and free vaccines, we should not continue hearing devastating stories of loss and suffering, yet they continue across the globe, including right here in Butte County. Getting severe illness or dying from COVID is preventable!

Finally, it is important for people to understand that just because we are able to start going back to some pre-pandemic "normal," COVID has not gone away. For those who remain unvaccinated, the risk continues. The more people who choose to get vaccinated, the safer and more protected our community will be. Make the choice that is right for all of us: get vaccinated. Go to buttecounty.net/ph to find vaccine locations.

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