



Thursday 2 December 2021

Health  
Updates

# Health updates to keep your mob safe.

## Information for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities on COVID-19 vaccines, and other health updates.

Welcome to the latest update for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander households, communities and organisations. In this edition, read about the importance of **getting the facts about COVID-19**, how **U and Me can stop HIV**, **Michael Donovan's experience of having COVID-19**, and more!

### Latest news

- [Is it true? Get the facts on COVID-19](#)
- ['The worst feeling I've ever had in my life'](#)
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HIV Awareness Week**
- **New COVID-19 vaccine resources available**
- [The Mary G Show](#)





### Is it true? Get the facts on COVID-19

Do the vaccines contain a microchip? Will they make me magnetic? Will they give me blood clots or cause infertility?

These are some of the many questions healthcare workers have been asked about the COVID-19 vaccines. There's a lot of myths and misinformation being shared on social media targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. It's important you get the fact-based information when it comes to the vaccines.

To get your answers and learn the truth about the COVID-19 vaccines [visit the Is it True webpage](#) or [download and share our fact-checked social media tiles](#).

Have a yarn to your healthcare worker to find out more.



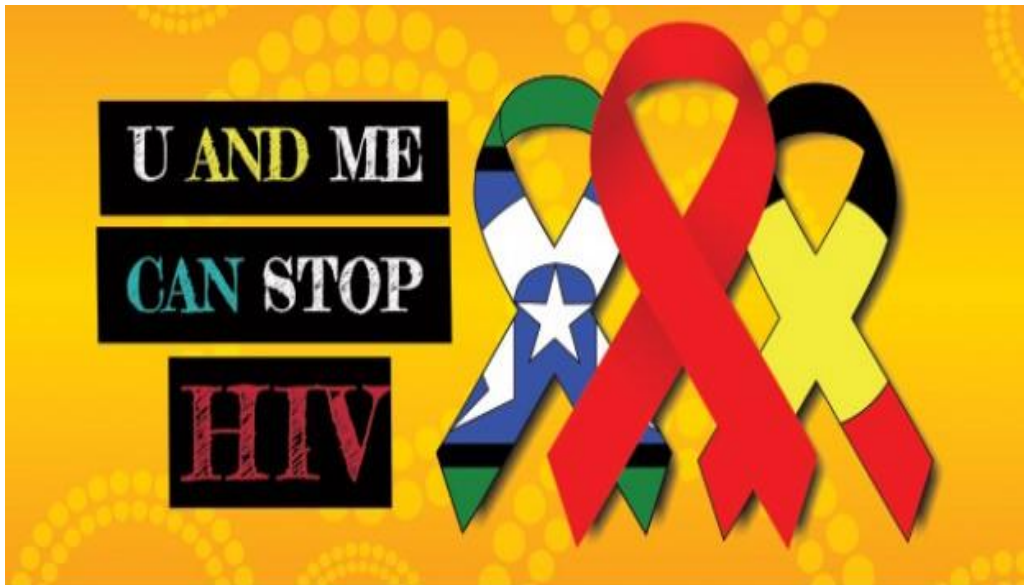
### 'The worst feeling I've ever had in my life'

Michael was holding off on having the COVID-19 vaccine but catching the virus changed his mind. 'I was very hesitant to get it. And then when I did get the virus, you know, there was no way that I wasn't going to get vaccinated because as I said, it was the worst feeling that I've ever felt in my life.'

[Listen to the full interview with Michael](#) as he talks about his experience of getting COVID-19, including the impacts on his family

and how having COVID-19 completely changed his view on getting vaccinated.

Read more on our [website](#).



### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HIV Awareness Week

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HIV Awareness Week (ATSIHAW) is held each year in the first week of December. Now in its 8<sup>th</sup> year, ATSIHAW has been making sure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people know about the risks of HIV. They also share some great information about how to get tested and what treatment involves.

This year, the theme is U and Me Can Stop HIV and there are events being held around the country. You can find out about the events by visiting the [ATSIHIV website](#).

To get tested for HIV, have a confidential yarn with your healthcare worker.

Read more on our [website](#).





## New COVID-19 vaccine resources available

There are new COVID resources being added to the department's website all the time.

*'The virus is going to come to the Pilbara, to the Kimberley's, to all regions, and it's going to be affecting our people.'* Dr Aleeta Fejo, Larrakia Traditional Owner and Elder / Warumungu traditional owner, GP and Senior Doctor.

[Hear from Dr. Aleeta](#) and others in a new video at the Wirraka Maya Health Service in South Hedland, Western Australia as they talk about the threat of COVID-19 to their community, and why they decided to get vaccinated.

Check out videos from our campaign [For All of Us](#), featuring [Baker Boy](#) as well as [street artist Tori-Jay Mordey and Dotty](#), a [local Larrakia Country artist](#), [Paralympian and proud Guringai/Wamba Wamba woman Amanda Reid](#), and [local people from Larrakia Country](#).

[See how fast COVID-19 can spread in unvaccinated people](#) in our new animation.

[In this video, Dr Mark Wenitong](#) addresses some of the stories being shared about the COVID-19 virus and encourages everyone to get vaccinated now.

[Download and share](#) a video featuring author and campaigner for Indigenous rights, Thomas Mayor, Kaurareg Aboriginal and Kalkalgal, Erubamle Torres Strait Islander. Thomas talks about the misconceptions around the presence of the Australian Defence Force in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, who are there at the request of community leaders to help people wanting to be vaccinated for COVID-19.

We have [lots of other resources](#) available to keep you informed about getting vaccinated against COVID-19.



### The Mary G Show

Mary G, the undisputed Black Queen of the Kimberley, is asking the hard questions about COVID-19 vaccines.

For five weeks, Mary G is interviewing key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on her radio show, asking them about COVID-19 vaccines.

Mary G recently spoke with Dr Mark Wenitong, an Aboriginal GP specialising in Indigenous health for 25 years. Dr Mark talks about herd immunity, and the importance of getting vaccinated before COVID-19 comes to your community.

Listen to the [most recent interviews on the Department of Health website](#).



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