

Making Vaccines Work Videos

The poetry of prevention

To coincide with the Global Vaccine Impact Conference, Gavi has commissioned spoken word artists from across the globe to compose new unique works celebrating the power of immunisation. Here are the results.

6 June 2023 10 min read by [Gavi Staff](#)



Still from My Pandemic Experience by Lus the Poet

My Vaccine, My Health

by Makida El-Husseini, Ghana

My Vaccine, My Health by Makida El-Husseini



Health is the wealth of every man
The price of it is the pursuit of every man
So mankind can have a state of complete

physical, mental, and social well-being
and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
For in health, we can water our fields in strength
To live for a better course
Than just food and water. Oh yes!
To plow our fields in strength
And harvest the fruits of our toils in joy
Our health is our wealth

Health is like the lamp
that makes us see through the darkest cave
The swords that swing through thousands of troopers
So with a flick, we make history!

Health is vaccination
It protects the immunity of our system
To fly away from deadly viruses and chronic diseases
that plague our growing greens to a demise
Vaccines are life

Life, that breathes into the souls of humanity's existence
And eschew the brutality of the cold breeze of death
So we can live in strength
and see posterity in a greener pasture
Watch them smile, watch them live

Vaccination is the reason children survive
some of the deadliest diseases
such as the six killer diseases:
Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tuberculosis,
Measles, Tetanus, and Poliomyelitis
Vaccination is the reason
the world has conquered
and still conquering deadly diseases
such as Cholera, Malaria, yellow fever, influenza,
Ebola, Covid-19, Hepatitis A, B, and E
And the list goes on, and on, and on
Singing the lyrics of life to our souls
And our bodies will dance and rejoice
in the tunes of the melodies they play.

Health is life
Health is vaccination
Prevention they say is better than cure
Therefore let all humanity vaccinate themselves
from deadly diseases and viruses
To preserve the course of humanity

To Imagine

by The Phoenix, Zambia



Imagine being told
that even before you were aware of it
a miracle had happened.
As if being born was not miracle enough
As soon as your lungs
weigh their first breath
and your eyes have
their first encounter with light
a battle has already begun.

One would have to imagine
because bacteria small to the human eye
would have already set its sights
on to your body.
Even before you utter your first words.

It is said that we are lucky
to be born of this generation
where one could create a thing
such as a vaccination.

After you are born
as soon as your immune system is strong
a vaccine is injected into you
protecting you from killer diseases.

Most of these vaccines
are registered when you are only a child
It is as if fighting a war unknown to you.

Before our time
many generations before mine
you and I were simply toys to these diseases.

Our scientists and health workers,
through sacrifice
have fought our future battles
by creating vaccines,
protecting us
so that we too may protect
the generations to come.

They have travelled great distances
and put in a lot of time
all devoted to the future health
of the human race.

Polio
Measles
Whooping cough
COVID-19
plus many deadly alike
we have defeated
and we have protected our children.

We must imagine a better future
Preserve the legacies
of our scientists and health workers
by continuing efforts towards preventative measures
and educating our communities
on the importance of vaccination.

If we imagine and aspire for a better society
preserve the efforts and research of our health workers
we will be better suited to be in the front line
to create vaccines for malaria, Ebola and HIV
that continue to kill millions.

My Pandemic Experience

by Lus The Poet, Uganda

My Pandemic Experience by Lus The poet.



Today, towards the end of my shift at the hospital
I made the last wish for a COVID-19 patient come true
It was the last video call to her relatives
To say goodbye
because she was not going to make it.

This patient's son asked for a few minutes of my time
as he then sang a song for his dying mother.

You see, son, there are some things
even death cannot touch
like the life in her eyes
when she heard her son sing her
a proper goodbye.

My mind melted
as mom went on to tell me
how her day at work had been.

A son singing a proper goodbye for his mother
sounded a lot like me in the near future.

My mother is a doctor.

I had watched the news earlier that day.
There was concern about health workers being at risk
of contracting the virus.

I watched as some fell victim
and I wondered when the right time would be
for me to mourn my mother.

So each day that mom left for work
I mourned her till she returned.
You see, as the whole world chanted
praise to health workers as heroes
it was a constant reminder to me that heroes are soldiers
that never made it back from war.

So every night when I went to sleep,
I dreamt of mom's death
And the more I feared for her death, the closer it felt.

But suddenly, as I watched the news one other day
There was a leap of hope heading the headlines.

Finally, a vaccine for COVID-19
had been invented.

And health workers and children were prioritized to get it first
This meant I didn't have to grieve my breathing mother
anymore.

This vaccine was my new hope in the "new normal"

Time has passed, and it seems like it's all over now
Even though the bad times left scars behind
they left lessons too.

But the biggest lesson that COVID-19-times taught me
is to take every moment with my mother
that life gives to me.

Because I can never be so sure when the next one will be
Or if there will ever be a next one at all

This poem, is for every soul that we lost
And every soul that lost another.

Antivirus

by Vituz Zulee, Ghana

Antivirus by Vituz Zulee



We were ambushed
They aimed their guns at us
Our arms were lifted in fear there was no time to shake
Our lives were the target an eyesore is what I saw
Our mouths were covered so no one could hear us
scream
But out of nowhere there was a shot!

And everything returned to normal
In a very twisted irony, I found out that not all shots take
lives
Some shots give life
So once again from the top

We were ambushed by a pandemic
They aimed their guns at us
Our arms lifted in fear there was no time to shake....
hands
Our mouths were covered so no one could hear us
scream
But out of nowhere there was a shot; a vaccine
And everything returned to normal
In a very twisted irony, I found out that not all shots take
lives
Some shots give life

But if only we understood, that we all had immunity
because some people got vaccinated and stopped the
spread
But the truth is we all are not immune
Much like a bullet proof vest
We are all alive because those who wore the vest, took

the shot
But what happens when those without vests, become the
target?

P is for Polio, C is for cure

by Mandi Vundla, South Africa

P is for Polio, C is for Cure by Mandi Vundla



The sky fills our throats with phlegm
The wind blows us through it's nose
The sun is coming down with a blistering fever
Today we do not play today

Our limbs lose their laughter
Our hands fall out of touch
Flowers are falling apart
Aching for our mothers crying hearts

Our dreams are crippled from head to bone
The swings cannot feel their feet
Our hope is climbing from ache to bone
In search of our hearts beat

While nursery rhymes nurse our spines
Time drags us over a crutch
A giant lung, a giant lung hurries the air for us
Giant men suckle giant poison from the world
To find our little lungs a cure

The Vaccine

by Álvaro Campos Suárez, Spain

The Vaccine By Álvaro Campos Suárez



It was Pasteur's idea, and before him, Jenner's:
the dream of a present without anyone ill,
a tour de force from evil to good
inoculating enemy agents as friends.
To immunize to make death die
means to make life universal.
To defend the present with a future,
to turn apathy into optimism.
To unite ourselves with strangers,
and through children save the elderly,
make wealth one for all,
and vaccinate everyone in every village, town and state.

Antigen Lovesong

Tjawangwa Dema, Botswana

Antigen Lovesong by Tjawangwa Dema



I am not without fear
For who is immune to loss?
But love of life is a gainful thing
It says yes
I am the rose and the box wrapped up in ribbons
I am the heart shaped image and the symbol of a white dress
The slow knit of mittens and colourful socks
But most of all

I am the face at your garden window
When alone means safer
The careful tuck of a clean sheet beneath your body's slack
slide
The soft-eyed smile beneath the mask
I am the roundabout carousel of a centrifuge
No cape
Save for the white coat flapping – a life raft when all the
worlds a sea of questions
Unraveling time and faith in stethoscopes and hesitant leaps
If you think about it too hard
The body – how easily its seams come undone
Its fleshy protocols of blood and breath
The snowed-in feel without either –
Too much thought
And too much seems uncertain
The needle's clear brook – small and liquid
Its phantom pinch – that quick-silver pin prick
And the infant's stunned wail
We are years weighing risk and ramification
We are loss and gain
The lab's steadfast glove and translucent test tubes
One last fight when you have little left in you
The voice saying look
Look back to what passes for before
Remember how easy it is to forget
How we come to still be here
Harder still to remember
Just how far we've come on this pulsing current we call life
From Onesimus to Plett
Jesty to Jenner and little Phipps
Mere heap of bone and flesh
No
I am not without fear
Its ocean sweep of feeling
But love of life
Is an astounding thing – You
In this body
That first country
Keeping breath and blood
Within its thin walls.
What is infallible is not living
Is not you faced with a bend
Sudden in the road
It does not grow, or move, or make
It neither breathes
Nor leans on love

But what is science to do with love
Its counted breaths care little
For the accuracy of a heart unraveling
The joyful measure of a soft smile

Yet
Yet its hours burn as ash
That you and you and yours
Might rise as the same self –
variant –
In this renewed
And still sentient guise

Importance Of Health And Impact Of Vaccination

by Imran Ali Zaib-Quetta, Pakistan

Importance Of Health And Impact Of Vaccination by Imr...



Everyone cherishes their health,
(And) everyone loves their daughter.
Giggling children, ticklish children,
For them to stay happy and cheerful,
We need to care for them.
The blessing of vaccines,
Are all meant for them.
These efforts, and hard work,
All meant to cure them.
Friends! Just think about it.
Isn't it our duty?
The smiles of our children
Should remain forever.
The blessing of God (baby boy)
The Mercy of God (baby girls),
We are bound to safeguard them.
Diseases like measles, convulsions, coughs,
And the polio virus,
We have to eradicate them.
The treatment is easy,

Just a few vaccines
and polio drops,
They are a guarantee of health.
Think about it,
If your young child
Faced disability,
Would your weak bones be able to handle it?
Would you be able to save them?
Because
As polio takes away smiles,
And polio takes away support in old age.
So let's come together, and pledge,
This vaccine,
Which guarantees health,
Will be given to children on time,
So that there is happiness,
There is kindness,
And the kingdom of colour and fragrance reigns.

Victory Vaccine

by Keion Kopper, USA

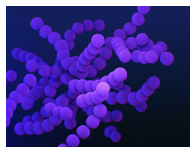
Victory Vaccine by Keion Kopper



A beacon of hope in troubled times
A shield of protection against diseases
that lurk in the shadows
A testament to the power of science
and human ingenuity
Standing as a formidable defense
Preventing the spread of illness, saving lives
and safeguarding our communities
We choose for ourselves,
The vulnerable, the young, and the elderly
We bear a responsibility toward our fellow beings
A commitment to the greater good

With its unwavering efficacy,
The vaccine offers a glimmer of light
amidst the darkness,
A pathway toward a safer, healthier future.
Let us embrace this powerful tool,
With gratitude and resolve,
Through vaccination
We can overcome adversity
Paving the way to brighter days ahead

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