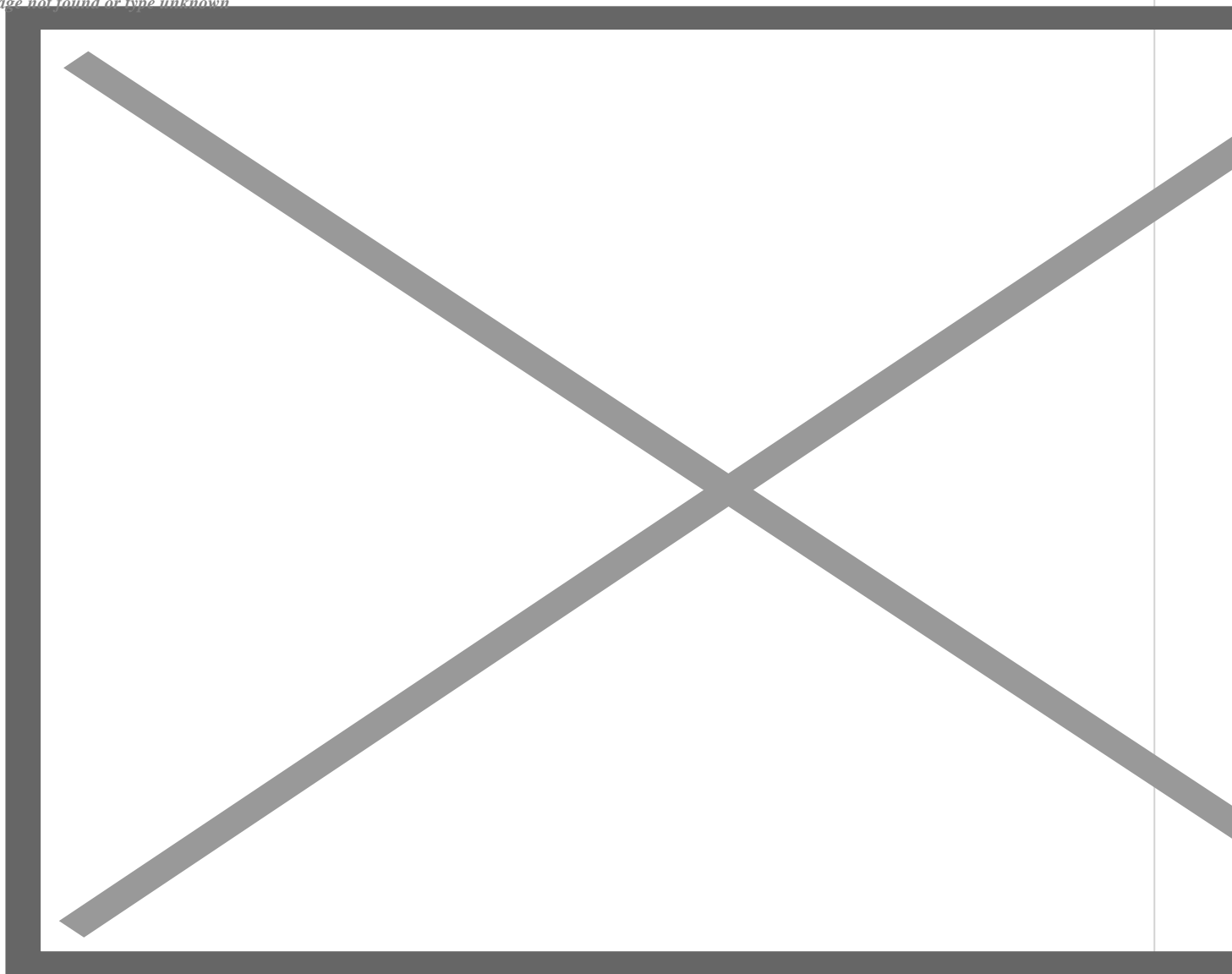


Dr. Fauci hopes Trump will encourage supporters to get COVID jabs

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Dr Anthony Fauci said COVID-19 vaccines are very safe and effective, and he does not understand the resistance to getting a jab. (Photo: Jonathan Ernst/Reuters)

Washington, March 15 (RHC)-- The top infectious disease expert in the United States has urged former US President Donald Trump to encourage his supporters to get vaccinated against COVID-19, as recent polls show high levels of hesitancy among Republicans.

Dr Anthony Fauci said on Sunday “it would make all the difference in the world” if the former president used his “inble influence” among Republicans to push them to accept coronavirus jabs.

“If he came out and said: ‘Go and get vaccinated. It’s really important for your health, the health of your family and the health of the country,’ it seems absolutely inevitable that the vast majority of people who are his close followers would listen to him,” Fauci said during an interview on the Fox News Sunday program.

Trump, who downplayed the threat of the virus while in office, urged people to get vaccinated late last month during a conservative political gathering in Florida. But he was widely criticized for his administration’s handling of the pandemic, which has killed more than 534,000 people across the U.S. and pushed millions of families into economic hardship amid a pandemic-related downturn.

The United States still has the most COVID-19 cases and coronavirus-related deaths in the world, with more than 29.4 million infections and more than 534,000 deaths as of Sunday, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

On Sunday, Fauci said he does not understand the resistance to getting a jab. “What is the problem here? This is a vaccine that is going to be lifesaving for millions of people,” he said on NBC’s Meet the Press program.

“I mean, I just can’t comprehend what the reason for that is when you have a vaccine that’s 94-95 percent effective and it is very safe. I just don’t get it,” he added.

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