

From: Wendy Bringas <WendyB@baptisthealth.net> **On Behalf Of** Bo Boulenger
Sent: Thursday, November 12, 2020 5:10 PM
To: DG-BHSF Everyone <DG-BHSFEveryone@baptisthealth.net>; DG-BT Everyone Automated <DG-BTEveryoneAutomated@baptisthealth.net>; BRRH Everyone <BRRHEveryone@brrh.com>; BRRH-BocaCare All <BocaCareAll@brrh.com>
Subject: COVID-19 Update- November 12

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On this week of Veterans Day, we are especially thankful for all of those who wear or have worn uniforms to protect our way of life. To all of our veterans across Baptist Health, thank you for your honorable service and bravery. There are so many heroes among us.

As we see COVID-19 cases rise across the nation and the state, we are noticing the same trends locally and across Baptist Health. We are currently caring for 209 patients with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, which is an increase of 36 percent over last week. While these numbers currently remain manageable, we are watching them closely. Even as we are hearing promising news of additional treatments and a vaccine for COVID-19, we all must continue to practice the well-established safety measures to prevent further spread of the virus, and remind our patients, colleagues, friends and family to do the same.

COVID-19 Vaccine

This week's breakthrough announcement by Pfizer and BioNtech claiming their vaccine is more than 90% effective, along with many other vaccines currently in the final trial phase, is promising. Once a vaccine is approved or authorized by the FDA, State and local public health officials will have the ability to quickly receive and distribute vaccines. Baptist Health will be able to support the overall vaccination efforts by acting as a point of dispensing, providing vaccines to pre-identified populations or priority groups on a volunteer basis. We are currently in the planning stages to ensure we have the ability to provide the vaccine when it becomes available. Our internal task force continues to look at the vaccines that might be available and is working to ensure we have the proper equipment, protocols and guidelines in place so that we are ready to receive and provide the vaccines once approved.

Monoclonal Antibody Therapy

Earlier this week, the [FDA granted Emergency Use Authorization](#) to a new therapeutic for early treatment of COVID-19. This drug, bamlanivimab, is a monoclonal antibody infusion for treatment in an outpatient setting. When administered to non-hospitalized patients as soon as possible after positive viral testing for SARS-CoV-2 and within 10 days of symptom onset, bamlanivimab may reduce viral load, symptoms, and risk of hospitalizations and emergency room visits associated with COVID-19.

Initial supplies are limited and will be managed by the State. We're making plans to receive this treatment and be able to provide it per the established guidelines. This treatment is intended for high-risk patients over the age of 12 who are in the early stages of the disease and who are not hospitalized or oxygen-dependent. We are in the process of developing guidelines and protocols for use at Baptist Health in order to be ready when we receive our first shipment. This is a promising treatment, and we're encouraged by the data.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

We continue to follow the CDC's guidelines for selecting, using and optimizing our supplies of protective devices, including medical grade gloves. We know that these guidelines are effective in protecting employees and patients as they are supported by scientific evidence and national and international standards, test methods and specifications. Medical gloves are used by healthcare personnel to prevent the spread of infection or illness. Medical gloves are disposable and include patient examination gloves and surgeon's gloves. As we see record level COVID-19 cases across the country, some hospital systems are experiencing shortage of gloves due to overseas supply constraints. Our Supply Chain team and Baptist Health's PPE Taskforce continue to ensure we have sufficient supplies of PPE, including medical gloves. It is imperative that we continue to use these protective devices judiciously, and in accordance with the CDC's standard and transmission-based precautions in order to maximize our supply.

Flu Vaccine

The vast majority of our employees have gotten their flu shot, which is great. If you have not done so, please schedule your flu shot appointment at your earliest opportunity through the [Flu App Center](#). If you received your flu shot elsewhere, please submit your proof of vaccination through the Flu App Center as soon as possible. It is important to note that you cannot get the flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccine at the same time. It is best to be prepared now for flu season and the rising number of COVID-19 cases in the community by ensuring you get your flu shot early.

Celebrating our Radiologic Technicians and Nurse Practitioners

National Radiologic Technology Week is November 8-14. During this week, we express our appreciation and gratitude to the medical imaging professionals who play a key role in health care and patient safety. These healthcare professionals have worked side-by-side with frontline personnel battling COVID-19. We admire their dedication and commitment.

It is also National Nurse Practitioner Week, and we honor all of our nurse practitioners for their continuous work in helping to combat COVID-19 and keep families safe. They order, perform and interpret diagnostic tests; diagnose and treat acute and chronic conditions; prescribe medications; and educate and partner with patients in making healthy lifestyle choices. We are grateful for the meaningful impact they make every day.

CDC Mask Update

There is a community benefit to mask wearing. This week, the CDC updated its [mask guidance](#) to include that mask wearing has a benefit to the wearers as well as the people around them. Previous guidance stated that the main benefit of wearing a mask was to help prevent infected people from spreading the virus to others. Please continue to wear masks and encourage others to do the same.

Our New Intranet is Live

Pineapple Connect, Baptist Health's new intranet, launched this week. You can access Pineapple Connect at work, at home or on the go to stay connected to what's happening around the organization. You can find today's update as well as previous updates and other important information on PineappleConnect.net.

Staying Safe During the Holidays

The COVID-19 pandemic has been stressful and isolating for many people, and most of us are looking forward to the opportunity to gather with family and friends during the holidays. Carefully consider your holiday plans in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep your family and friends safe as the number of COVID-19 cases continue to rise in our communities. Until a COVID-19 vaccine is available,

people who are at increased risk for severe illness due to COVID-19 because of age or underlying illness (such as heart disease, diabetes, etc.) should take strict measures to prevent infection. Celebrating through a virtual event (such as a virtual potluck), food exchange (family member cooks a small dish and drops it off at another's home using safe food practices), or a small gathering with immediate family members in your household will reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19.

Families need to be cautious with gathering with family or friends that do not live in the household, such as a college student returning home for the holidays, those living in different households or those traveling from out of town. Per the CDC, the size of the gathering should be based on the ability of the guests to effectively social distance (stay at least 6 feet apart), wear masks and wash hands. Host outdoor rather than indoor (open windows/doors or place central AC on continuous circulation) events when possible and avoid gathering in crowded or poorly ventilated spaces.

Additional tips to consider during social gatherings include:

- Limit the number of guests and plan to have event outdoors if possible.
- Avoid direct contact with others, including handshakes and hugs.
- Seat guests at least 6 feet apart in small tables when eating.
- Encourage guests to wash their hands frequently or use hand sanitizer.
- Limit contact with commonly touched surfaces or shared items/utensils.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces.
- Limit guests to touch or interact with pets.
- Ask guests to self-quarantine for the 14 days prior to event.
- Get tested for COVID-19 two days prior to the gathering if possible.

Please continue to keep safety top-of-mind during this holiday season.

As always, thank you for all that you do for Baptist Health.

Bo Boulenger

Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer

6855 Red Road | Coral Gables, FL 33143

Direct: 786-662-7572 | Main: 786-662-7111

Email: bob@baptisthealth.net



Connect
BaptistHealthSF

