

From: [Schwartz, David](#)
Subject: DOM Covid Communication
Date: Sunday, January 10, 2021 4:27:24 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image004.png](#)
[An Update from the Internal Medicine Residency Program.mmg](#)
[Genetic Variants of SARS-CoV-2--What Do They Mean_.pdf](#)

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

I hope you and your families are doing well. There are a few topics I'd like to discuss that I think may be of interest to you.

Covid Infections: While Covid hospitalizations are decreasing, we have seen a bump in the number of Covid infections that is projected by IHME not to be persistent. Unfortunately, deaths are up and will likely continue to increase through the middle of February.

- **Colorado:** Over the past week there has been an average of about 2900 cases per day, an increase of 24% from the average two weeks earlier. Deaths are up by 13% and hospitalizations are down by 25%.
- **Local Hospitalizations:** The decrease in cases per day in Colorado is reflected in the census data at UCH, VAMC, DH, and NIH. At UCH, we have less than half the number of hospitalized Covid patients we were caring for only a month ago.
- **Projection:** IHME projects (<https://covid19.healthdata.org/united-states-of-america/colorado?view=daily-deaths&tab=trend>) that in Colorado daily infections and hospitalizations have peaked and will continue to go down but it's likely we'll see an increase in Covid-related deaths through the middle of February.

Vaccines: Thus far, 2.5% of people in Colorado have received at least one dose of the RNA-based vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna). UHealth has delivered more than 48,000 doses of the vaccine. The vaccination process is complex and logistically challenging, and UHealth, NIH, VAMC, CHCO, and DH have done a great job administering these vaccines to our faculty, trainees, and selected staff.

- Given the complex logistics involved in vaccine administration, **do not try to reschedule your second vaccine appointment** unless there is immediate threat to life, limb, or eye sight, unanticipated military deployment, death of a primary family member, or confirmed or suspected active Covid infection.
- If faculty or housestaff need coverage to get their second vaccination, please figure out how to do this.
- There are some inconsistencies in who is getting vaccinated at each site (UCH, NIH, DH, CHCO, and VAMC) and I recognize that this is frustrating and confusing. Each site is working within state regulations and is maximizing the number of individuals that can be vaccinated. If you have questions or concerns, please get in touch with the Command Center at your site of practice or employment or simply email me and I'll help you work through any questions.
- State-by-state Covid vaccination distribution and administration is available on a new CDC website (<https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations>).

Education: Take a look at the attached email from the Internal Medicine Residency Program. This email summarizes the substantial contribution that our housestaff have made to the care of patients with Covid (500 weeks of clinical service), and also illustrates how top-down and bottom-up leadership have resulted in creative and nimble approaches to effective education and community building. Although this year has been tough for everyone, it's clear to me that our housestaff training program has been strengthened by the experience.

Town Halls: Last week's Town Hall with Jon Samet helped put the pandemic numbers in perspective and make sense of the changing pattern of Covid infections (see below link). Given concerns about the genetic variants of Covid-19, I've decided to have our next town hall ([Wednesday night due to scheduling conflicts](#)) focus on this topic; Eric Poeschla will join us for this discussion. Also, take a look at the attached recent commentary that succinctly discusses the implications of the genetic variants of SARS-CoV-2.

- **Dec 2, 2020** "[UCH COVID Command Center "What it is and How it Works"](#)
- **Dec 10, 2020** "[Vaccine Distribution](#)"
- **Dec 17, 2020** "[Your Charge is Low: How to Manage Pandemic Depletion](#)"
- **Jan 7, 2021** "[COVID-19: What Happened post-Thanksgiving and What's Next?](#)"
- **Next Town Hall:** Jan 13, 2021, Wednesday from 7-8 PM: "Implications of Genetic Variants of SARS-CoV-2: A New Pandemic Phase?" (<https://ucdenver.zoom.us/j/96282507513?pwd=V3FlbG00Y0VhYzRlR0RlSlZxYSUzOZp0Q3>; Meeting ID: 962 8250 7513)

As your chair, I feel honored and privileged to provide leadership during this time of uncertainty and turmoil. Your grit, focused determination, and ability to work with each other continues to inspire me. The challenges that we've faced and continue to address both nationally and locally have solidified our collective values and strengthened us individually and professionally. Nationally, I'll only say that I'm convinced that justice will prevail and I have full faith in our democracy. Locally, I remain extremely proud of your persistence and achievements, and will do everything in my power to support you. Please get in touch with me if you have concerns, questions, or suggestions. My very best wishes.
David

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