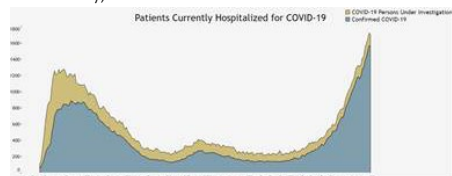


From: [Schwartz, David](#)
Cc: [Allen, Larry](#); [Barnes, Kathleen](#); [Borges, Virginia](#); [Burden, Marisha](#); [Buttrick, Peter](#); [Chonchol, Michel](#); [Colgan, Sean](#); [Earnest, Mark](#); [Edmundowicz, Steven](#); [Fontenot, Andrew](#); [Freed, Curt](#); [Gritz, Mark](#); [Haugen, Bryan](#); [Holers, Michael](#); [Jordan, Craig](#); [Messersmith, Wells](#); [Moss, Marc](#); [Poeschia, Eric M](#); [Schwartz, Robert](#); [Stenmark, Kurt](#); [Austin, Gregory](#); [Beck, James](#); [Carmichael, Corena](#); [Flores, Sonia](#); [Ho, Michael](#); [Keyser, Hollis](#); [Musani, Ali](#); [Albert, Richard](#)
Subject: DOM Covid Communication
Date: Sunday, November 22, 2020 10:40:15 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[image003.png](#)
[image010.png](#)
[image011.png](#)

Dear Friends and Colleagues.

I wish all of you a happy Thanksgiving and hope you, your family, and your friends are doing well. During this Thanksgiving, I am particularly thankful for your dedication to our patients and our profession. Throughout this year, I have been inspired by your individual and collective medical expertise, leadership, altruism, work ethic, and perseverance. Our department has led the way in getting through this crisis and we are succeeding because of you. Thank You. Like others, I look forward to sharing the Thanksgiving holiday at home with others in my Covid bubble. Please don't travel during this holiday, and remember that a negative Covid test doesn't mean you should skip other measures like wearing a mask and social distancing. Enjoy the holiday, there's lots to celebrate but I need you to stay healthy. Happy Thanksgiving!

The number of new cases of Covid and confirmed Covid hospitalizations continue to increase substantially in Colorado (<https://covid19.colorado.gov/data>). Fortunately, the number of deaths are lower than what we experienced last spring, however, there's always a lag in these numbers.



At UCH, the number of hospitalized Covid cases have increased by about 20% in the past week (83 floor patients, 40 ICU patients of whom 21 are ventilated). At the end of April, our highest number of Covid+ patients at UCH was 145 (87 floor patients, 58 ICU patients of whom 42 were ventilated). The VA, DH, and NJH are experiencing a similar increase in the number of Covid patients. Thus, of the patients hospitalized during this surge, a lower proportion are going to the ICU (33% vs 40%) and of those that go to the ICU a lower proportion require mechanical ventilation (53% vs 72%).

A few things you should know:

- Despite the increase in cases, and the difficulties we'll face in the next several months, there is reason to be optimistic.
 - The RNA vaccines produced by Pfizer and Moderna have greater than 90% efficacy and appear to be safe. The Pfizer vaccine is now being reviewed by the FDA for emergency use and Moderna's may not be far behind. The first Americans could get a vaccine by mid-December. For up-to-date information on the vaccines, listen to this week's Townhall by Tom Campbell and John Douglas (<https://youtu.be/Gsl-ST-oNk>). This was a fantastic presentation.
 - The FDA granted emergency authorization for the Regeneron neutralizing antibody treatment. For more information on the efficacy of neutralizing antibody to SARS-CoV-2, listen to our recent medicine grand rounds by Paul Bieniasz and Theodora Hatzioannou (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XVf3myts0k&feature=youtu.be&t=2>). This was also a fantastic presentation.
- UCH has been asked by the state to have plans in place to increase bed capacity by 50%. Marisha Burden has been working with Anne Fuhlbrigge, Jean Kutner, Ellen Burnham and me to develop departmental and interdepartmental plans for providers to address this state mandate. I think we've come up with a reasonable approach that we plan to discuss with Division Heads for their input before finalizing plans for this expanded level of care.
- Free COVID testing for our asymptomatic faculty, students, staff, and family members is available through this site: <https://www.cuanschutz.edu/coronavirus/covid-19-testing-contact-tracing>. More information is available [here](#).

We've had a number of recent Covid-19 presentations in the DOM which were exceptional and are available on our website (DOM COVID-19 Resource Web Page: <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/medicine/faculty-affairs/covid-19>) and through the specific links below:

DOM Recent COVID-19 Grand Rounds:

Sept 30, 2020: [The Triumph of Despair: Health Inequities and Structural Racism](#)

Oct 14, 2020: [Impact of COVID-19 on Family Members and Providers](#)

Oct 21, 2020: [Effect of HIV-1 and SARS-CoV-2 on innate lymphoid cells](#)

Oct 28, 2020: [The Neutralizing Antibody Response to SARS-CoV-2 Infection](#) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5XVf3myts0k&feature=youtu.be&t=2>)

DOM Recent COVID-19 Town Halls:

Oct 28, 2020: [COVID-19: What's Next?](#)

Nov 5, 2020: [Fighting Stigma: Facing Barriers to Mental Health for Faculty and Staff](#)

Nov 12, 2020: [Treatment: what's known and what's in the pipeline](#) (<https://youtu.be/lywhVB3U5BY?t=1>)

Nov 19, 2020: [Vaccine Development, Trials, and Distribution](#) (<https://youtu.be/Gsl-ST-oNk>)

Departmental Finances: We are beginning to see the financial effects of this surge of Covid cases. Compared to last year at this time, our charges are down by 5% and receipts are down by 4% (each division has a unique profile). Despite these financial challenges, my primary goals are to continue to support our faculty, trainees, and staff, and the educational and research programs that we've built over the past decade. I have and will continue to do everything possible to support your current level of compensation.

Importance of Ambulatory Care: As we've watched and responded to the approaching Covid surge, we've devoted a disproportionate amount of our time and attention to the acute and critical care needs of our patients and our efforts to meet those needs. It is critical in this holiday season to recognize the tremendous contributions and the enormous efforts of our faculty and staff in the outpatient arena. This work is foundational to everything else we do. The overwhelming

majority of our patient encounters occur, virtually or in person, in an outpatient setting. These efforts ensure our patients stay healthy and out of hospital – their chronic conditions managed and their mental health needs addressed. I want to recognize the commitment, resilience, dedication, and creativity on the part of our providers to maintain access to outstanding care for all of our patients through our ambulatory operations. Your work has been extraordinary and deserves to be called out.

I'm certain, now more than ever, that we'll get through this and we'll be stronger. Every decision we've made, we've made as a team, and I think that's resulted in better options for us and more support from our partners, the SOM, CU Medicine, and UCH. While we can't predict the future, we can build on the values and tactics that got us through the first surge – interdisciplinary collaboration, dedication, persistence, altruism, generosity, respect for our colleagues, and our laser focused attention on solving the Covid crisis. Vaccines and more effective treatments are within reach, but we need to rely on our collective determination to get through the next several months, they will be tough. As I've said before, we need to have the humility and strength to let the truth and our values guide our next steps. Please send me your concerns and ideas. I'm confident that we'll get through this together. My very best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving.

David

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