



EISENHOWER HEALTH

An Update for Our Community from Eisenhower Health

At Eisenhower Health, we know that you want to be updated on the pandemic and its effect on your health system. In addition to the statistics that are posted weekly on these pages, we want to provide you with some additional information, in part because we know the news has been upsetting and leaves you with many questions.

The situation is, of course, quite serious. We have seen an increase in patients in the hospital with COVID-19, reaching a new peak of 154 today (1/6/21). As a reminder, we had 52 patients at Thanksgiving. The positivity rate for all people tested at Eisenhower for the virus is now 30.6%.

We adjust daily to the current circumstances. As our Chief Medical Officer Alan Williamson, MD, has shared frequently with our local news outlets, staffing is the biggest challenge. Our employees are members of this community and, like you, run the risk of exposure to COVID. Approximately 120 employees (not all of them frontline staff) are currently not working due to contracting the virus. This puts enormous pressure on the rest of the health system. We have received six additional nurses from the State's resource pool. While that's helpful, it's not nearly enough. We are also making adjustments in various areas of care – adding more ICU beds, deploying physicians and staff where they are most needed and more. Like other hospitals in California, we are suspending elective surgical cases and procedures to ensure that our focus is on the patients who currently need us the most.

We strongly encourage anyone who has signs and symptoms of a stroke or heart attack to call 911. Delaying care can lead to the need for intensive care. Addressing critical, life-threatening conditions immediately can shorten your stay in the hospital and save your life. Please do not hesitate to ask for help. We are here for you.

Most importantly, aside from serious health concerns, we need you to stay home as much as possible. The spread of the virus is impacting all of us in this community and you have a very important role in helping frontline health care workers do their job. Not everyone is going to get the disease but with so many people being asymptomatic, please assume you can get it from anyone and that you might have it and spread it as well. If you do believe you have COVID and are an Eisenhower patient, please call our hotline at 760-837-8988 for next steps.

We know you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine. We are updating our frequently asked questions regularly, but please know that we do not anticipate the vaccine being available to the general public for another six to eight weeks. Even then, we need you to take all of the same precautionary measures until most people are vaccinated and we begin to see significant change in the spread of the virus. We do not have any information yet from the State about the distribution of the vaccines for the general public, and for that reason, we do not know how many Eisenhower will have, how we will offer the vaccine or where. We simply cannot formulate a final plan until we have those details. In the meantime, we are in the process of vaccinating our nearly 5,000 staff and physicians. We have received just over 4,000 vaccines to date – not enough to vaccinate everyone with their first dose – but we believe the vaccines will continue to arrive regularly, allowing us to proceed as quickly as possible. Please visit our FAQs for additional information and resources about the vaccine.

Thank you for your continued well wishes and support of our hard working staff and physicians. Please remember, the best way you can show your appreciation is to stay home and stay healthy. We wish you good health in 2021.