

March 19, 2023

THE CROWDS ARE GONE....AND VERY FEW PEOPLE ARE MASKING, BUT THE VIRUS REMAINS AROUND.....IT'S NOT FINISHED WITH US....ESPECIALLY IF YOU HAVE NOT HAD COVID YET.

CONSIDER WEARING A GOOD MASK (KN95 OR N95) SELECTIVELY AT BUSY INDOOR LOCATIONS TO STAY HEALTHY. IF GOOD VENTILATION, OPEN SPACES....NO NEED TO MASK AS A GENERAL RULE.

CONTINUE TO LIVE YOUR LIFE AND GO OUT AND ABOUT AS YOU FEEL COMFORTABLE..... AND YOU SHOULD FEEL COMFORTABLE DOING SO.

IF YOU HAVE HAD 5 COVID SHOTS....THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL SHOTS AT THIS TIME AND YOU CANNOT GET ANOTHER VACCINE AT THIS TIME. WE AWAIT WORD ON PLAN FOR ANY ADDITIONAL VACCINATIONS. WE ANTICIPATE COVID VACCINATIONS WILL BE EITHER ONCE OR TWICE A YEAR

IF YOU HAVE NOT HAD COVID AND NOT HAD 5 SHOTS....AND ARE OVER 65...THE DATA IS COMPELLING THAT ADDITIONAL SHOTS WILL KEEP YOU OUT OF THE HOSPITAL. I HIGHLY RECOMMEND THIS.

**FLU IS ON THE DECLINE AND LEAVING THE VALLEY.
RSV IS LOW...**

COVID REMAINS STABLE IN ARIZONA AT MODERATE LEVELS. WE ARE NOW SEEING 10 CASES OF COVID PER

**WEEK AMONG OUR PATIENTS AND MOSTLY AMONG
THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET HAD COVID.**

**IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO GET ANOTHER COVID BOOSTER.
DATA CONTINUES TO SUPPORT IT'S USE AND BENEFITS.
IF YOU ARE OVER 65 YOU SHOULD GET 5 SHOTS IN
TOTAL.... THE DATA SUPPORTS THIS.**

**FLU IS WANING. IT IS LATE FOR FLU SHOTS.... YOU CAN
GET IF YOU WANT, BUT FLU SEASON IS RESOLVING.**

**COVID REMAINS FAIRLY COMMON..... OUR PATIENTS
ARE DOING WELL.**

HOW TO MANAGE AT THIS TIME FOR GATHERINGS:

**PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE COMFORTABLE GETTING
TOGETHER AND THEY SHOULD GET TOGETHER.**

**TO REDUCE RISK....HERE ARE SOME IDEAS TO
CONSIDER:**

**GET YOUR COVID BOOSTER ...TOO LATE FOR THE FLU
SHOT.**

**DO NOT ATTEND GATHERINGS IF YOU ARE NOT FEELING
WELL. ASK OTHERS NOT TO ATTEND IF THEY ARE NOT
FEELING WELL.**

**KEEP AIR MOVING IN GATHERING AREAS.
VENTILATION...BY NATURAL MEANS OUTDOORS OR
WITH FANS, CAN BE HELPFUL.**

WEARING A HIGH-QUALITY MASK AT GATHERINGS IS GOOD IF YOU ARE TRAVELING AND WISH TO AVOID INFECTION FOR THE HOLIDAYS. IT IS IMPERATIVE FOR THOSE WITH TRULY REDUCED IMMUNITY...THOSE RECEIVING CHEMOTHERAPY, THOSE WITH SEVERE LUNG DISEASE, AND THOSE RECOVERING FROM RECENT HOSPITALIZATION.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

WEAR N-95 OR KN95 MASKS IN SITUATIONS THAT YOU FEEL ARE HIGHER EXPOSURE IF YOU WISH TO REDUCE YOUR RISK

WHEN GOING OUT TO ACTIVITIES.... SELECT OPTIONS THAT ALLOW FOR BETTER VENTILATION INSIDE, OR CHOOSE OUTSIDE OPTIONS

IF YOU GET SICK YOU NEED TO TEST FOR COVID. CONSIDER COMING INTO THE OFFICE PARKING LOT FOR FLU TESTING AS WELL

TREATMENT FOR COVID AND FOR FLU IS AVAILABLE AND WORTHWHILE IN MANY INSTANCES. TREATMENT FOR RSV IS PURELY SYMPTOMATIC.... WE TREAT THE SYMPTOMS AS THERE IS NO ANTIVIRAL FOR RSV

COVID IS UNDER CONTROL ON A BROAD BASIS RISKS OF COMPLICATIONS ARE LOW FOR THE MULTI-VAXXED

**BOOSTER COVID VACCINATIONS:
THE NEW COVID VACCINE IS BIVALENT.... THIS MEANS IT
CONTAINS THE ORIGINAL VACCINE COVERAGE.... PLUS,
COVERAGE MORE SPECIFICALLY FOR BA5 FORMS OF
COVID.**

**GIVEN THE SAFETY OF THE VACCINE, IT IS BEST FOR
EVERY ADULT TO CONSIDER THIS BOOSTER...BUT....**

I STRONGLY RECOMMEND THE BOOSTER VACCINE IF:

**YOU HAVE NOT HAD COVID AND ARE OVER 65 YEARS
OLD**

**YOU HAVE NOT HAD COVID AND HAVE HEALTH ISSUES
THAT MAKE YOU MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO COVID
COMPLICATIONS SUCH AS.... EMPHYSEMA, SIGNIFICANT
DIABETES, HEART FAILURE, OR ARE ON IMMUNE
SUPPRESSING MEDICATION.**

**IF YOU HAD COVID YOU CAN STILL BENEFIT FROM
ANOTHER BOOSTER, BUT IT IS NOT AS ESSENTIAL, AS
YOUR PREVIOUS COVID INFECTION DOES HELP BOOST
YOUR IMMUNITY THROUGH NATURAL MEANS.**

**IF YOU HAVE HAD 4 COVID VACCINES, THE 5TH VACCINE
IS NOT AS ESSENTIAL, BUT IT WILL PROVIDE
ADDITIONAL PROTECTION AND IS WORTH STRONGLY
CONSIDERING.**

**REMEMBER, IF YOU GET COVID WE CAN ALWAYS TREAT
YOU WITH PAXLOVID PILLS, THEY ARE EFFECTIVE.**

**GET YOUR COVID BOOSTER AND GET YOUR FLU
BOOSTER**

**COVID BOOSTER IS FULLY EFFECTIVE IN 1 WEEK
FLU IS FULLY EFFECTIVE IN 3 WEEKS**

**MANY WHO HAVE AVOIDED COVID ARE NOW GETTING
INFECTED DESPITE ALL OF THEIR EFFORTS.**

**PAXLOVID ANTI-VIRAL PILLS ARE WIDELY AVAILABLE....
BUT MOST PEOPLE DO NOT REQUIRE MEDICATION TO
TREAT THEIR CASE OF COVID.**

**PLEASE LIVE LIFE, BEING CAREFUL IN WAYS THAT
MAKE YOU FEEL MOST COMFORTABLE, BUT DO NOT
RESTRICT YOUR ACTIVITIES.**

**WE WILL CONTINUE TO MONITOR THE SITUATION, BUT
AT THIS TIME, IN THE USA FOR THE MULTI-VACCINATED,
WE HAVE REACHED OUR ENDPOINT.**

**FOR THE UNVACCINATED.... KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE
ROAD.... COVID CONTINUES TO BE AN ISSUE.
THE CURRENT VARIANT IS MUCH Milder, BUT THERE
ARE CONCERNS FOR THOSE WHO ARE NOT
VACCINATED. WE ARE TREATING NEARLY ALL THE
UNVACCINATED THAT GET COVID.**

**IF YOU HAVE SIGNIFICANT RESPIRATORY SYMPTOMS,
PRESUME THIS IS COVID AND PROTECT OTHERS!!!**

PAXLOVID PILLS AVAILABLE FOR ALL BUT ARE ONLY NECESSARY FOR THOSE WITH CHALLENGING SYMPTOMS IN THE FIRST 5 DAYS OR THOSE AT HIGH RISK FOR COMPLICATIONS FROM BREAKTHROUGH COVID.

I RECOMMEND THE BOOSTER GENERALLY, WITH THESE SPECIFIC COMMENTS:

DO GET THE BOOSTER IF:

- YOU HAD 4 SHOTS AND DID WELL WITH THEM, YOU SHOULD DO WELL WITH THE 5TH SHOT.
- IF YOU DID NOT GET BREAKTHROUGH COVID YET.
- THE OLDER YOU ARE THE MORE BENEFICIAL THE 5TH COVID SHOT. FOR 70 AND ABOVE THE SHOT IS DEFINITELY QUITE USEFUL. UNDER THAT AGE IT'S LESS BENEFICIAL AND UP TO YOU PERSONALLY IF YOU WANT THE SHOT.
- DO STAY WITH THE SAME SHOT. IF YOU HAVE BEEN GETTING PFIZER...STAY WITH PFIZER. IF YOU HAVE BEEN GETTING MODERNA...STAY WITH MODERNA.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MASKING WHEN TRAVELLING IS A PERSONAL DECISION.

- DO NOT CONCERN YOURSELF IF OTHERS ARE MASKING. IF YOU WEAR A HIGH-QUALITY MASK YOU

ARE INCREASING YOUR PROTECTION AND DECREASING YOUR RISK.

- **I DO RECOMMEND WEARING A KN95 OR N95 IN THE AIRPORT TERMINAL WHERE EXPOSURE IS GREATEST.**
- **ON THE AIRPLANE, WHEN THE ENGINES ARE FULLY ON, THE AIR IS BEING HIGHLY FILTERED AND EXPOSURE IS MUCH LESS. WEARING AN EXCELLENT MASK WILL REDUCE YOUR RISK DURING FLIGHT, BUT IT IS UP TO YOU IF YOU WISH TO USE THE MASK AT THAT TIME.**

GUIDELINES IF YOU GET BREAKTHROUGH COVID:

<https://doctordoug.com/2022/01/10/i-have-covidwhat-do-i-do/>

COVID TESTING WITH AT HOME TESTS (ANTIGEN TESTS) ARE GENERALLY ACCURATE AND THEY ARE USEFUL. BUT A NEGATIVE TEST IN THE SETTING OF CLASSIC SYMPTOMS.... IS LIKELY A FALSE RESULT.

DO A PCR TEST TO CROSS CHECK OR IF YOU HAVE CLASSIC COVID SYMPTOMS, OR YOU MAY 'HOLD ON ADDITIONAL TESTING' AND PRESUME YOU HAVE COVID AND FOLLOW PRACTICES FOR THOSE WITH COVID.

5 DAYS OF QUARANTINE AND 5 DAYS OF MASKING IS THE PLAN FOR ALL COVID POSITIVE PATIENTS WHO HAVE BEEN VACCINATED.

PAXLOVID (PFIZER PILL FOR COVID) & MOLNUPIRAVIR (MERCK PILL) ARE AVAILABLE BUT RECOMMENDED ONLY FOR THOSE AT PARTICULARLY HIGH RISK OF

COMPLICATIONS (IMMUNE SUPPRESSED OR UNVACCINATED).

HOW DO I GET TESTED FOR POSSIBLE ACTIVE COVID INFECTION?

TESTING CAN BE DONE AT LOCATIONS THROUGHOUT
THE CITY OR BY A SELF-TEST FROM YOUR LOCAL
PHARMACY.

<https://doctordoug.com/2020/11/22/covid-19-testing-sites/>

YOU MAY PURCHASE A HOME TEST KIT FROM AMAZON
OR YOU CAN GET SIMILAR KITS AT WALGREENS OR CVS
OR YOUR LOCAL PHARMACY.

I THINK IT WOULD BE A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE A HOME KIT FOR SELF-TESTING AT HOME. IT IS LIKELY YOU WILL USE IT BY THE END OF WINTER.

RECOMMENDED HOME TEST KITS FROM AMAZON ARE:

- iHealth COVID-19 Antigen Rapid Test
- Quidel QuickVue at-Home OTC COVID-19

https://www.amazon.com/iHealth-COVID-19-Authorized-Non-invasive-Discomfort/dp/B09KZ6TBNY/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?crid=1QISNYIENRKEO&keywords=ihealth+covid-19+antigen+rapid+test&qid=1655045654&srefix=ihealth%2Caps%2C169&sr=8-1-spons&psc=1&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEwNUkwMFdSWlNQTUVQwJmVuY3J5cHRlZElkPUExMzc1MzMzMzBUUjJUSVg4UFA5UyZlbmNyeXB0ZWRRBZEikPUExNDQ5Mzl4MzNBOTdXUk9TSk5FMiZ3aWRnZXROYW1lPXNwX2FoZiZhY3Rpb249Y2xpY2tSZWRpcmVjdCZkb05vdExvZmNsZW5kaW50PS1-

https://www.amazon.com/Quidel-QuickVue-at-Home-COVID-19-Test/dp/B093NBTF75/ref=sr_1_3?crid=25COAA6CR9FBY&dchild=1&keyw

[ords=rapid+covid+testing+kit+for+home&qid=1630678185&srefix=rapid+covid+test%2Caps%2C241&sr=8-3](#)

TESTING LOCATIONS CAN ALSO BE FOUND HERE:

<https://doctordoug.com/2020/11/22/covid-19-testing-sites/>

YOU CAN SEE DAILY TRENDS FOR ARIZONA AND THE U.S. HERE, ON THE CDC WEBSITE...JUST CHOOSE 'ARIZONA' FROM THE LIST.

https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailytrends

To monitor the course of COVID in Maricopa County, go to: <https://covidactnow.org>

LOCATIONS FOR COVID TESTING OTHER THAN OUR OFFICE...SEE OUR UPDATED LIST:

<https://doctordoug.com/2020/06/30/covid-19-testing-sites/>

LATE NIGHT TESTING AT NEXT CARE FACILITIES IS A CONSIDERATION. HERE IS THE LINK:

<https://nextcare.com/curbside/>

Know that our office is responding to COVID, and we are here to help. Reach out for assistance if you are not feeling well. We will develop a plan of action for you to move forward.

Yours in good health,

Dr. Lakin