

August 4, 2021
COVID-19 UPDATE
From Dr. Sara Knutson

Delta Health Medical Providers:

Update on Monoclonal AB

- 1) There is a new EUA indication for use as 'post exposure prophylaxis' - we can now use Regeneron in patients who are high risk for disease progression AND who are not fully vaccinated or expected to mount an adequate immune response WHEN they have had a significant exposure to a known COVID+ patient. These patients don't need a COVID test to warrant treatment.

****Example:** post lung transplant patient who is fully vaccinated has an unprotected significant exposure to a COVID+ person, but still tests COVID negative. Under this new EUA, the transplant patient can get the Regeneron.

- 2) Please keep this indication in mind especially for your immunocompromised patients (chemo, transplant, rheumatologic meds etc.) who inadvertently have a significant exposure, regardless of their test results or vaccination status.

Update on Vaccines: **keep an eye on the booster recommendations******

Early Israel data suggests reduced efficacy for the Pfizer vaccine against Delta variant for infection, although still good protection against hospitalization and death.

Delta outbreak in MA confirms transmission Delta variant by and to fully vaccinated persons (this data now informing public health practices for return to universal masking, etc.)

Israel (pretty much 100% fully vaccinated) is starting booster doses at 5 months for >60yo; other EU countries will likely follow suit. This is essentially a testing ground for the FDA's review of this topic and Pfizer's application for booster EUA, likely to occur in August.

****Some early data suggests a modest sag in antibody titers for Pfizer fully-vaccinated persons at 6 months post vaccine. Some HCPs vaccinated in 2021 have already started clamoring for a booster.**

Update on Vaccine Mandates for Employees:

- 1) There is an increasing tidal wave of larger and prestigious hospital organizations mandating vaccines for their employees.

<https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/workforce/hospitals-health-systems-mandating-vaccines-for-workersjune17.html>

Momentum for Vaccine Mandates for health care workers is growing. The Department of Veterans Affairs announced this week that it will require frontline health care workers to be vaccinated against COVID-19. The American Hospital Association says it supports mandates. So do other major medical groups, such as the American Medical Association and the American Academy of Nursing, which joined with more than 50 other organizations in a joint statement supporting vaccine mandates for health care workers, including those in nursing homes and other long-term care centers.

Hospitals requiring mandates include: Kaiser Permanente in CA, Memorial Hermann in Houston, all NJ and NY hospitals, Methodist in Dallas, Children's Hosp in Philadelphia, Duke University Hospital, Dana Farber Cancer Institute, Mayo Clinic, Banner Health in PHX, Massachusetts General/Brigham Women's Hospital. The list goes on and on. In Colorado, UCHHealth, Banner Health, Denver Health have all announced vaccine mandates that will take effect this fall.

"We care for some of the most vulnerable people in our communities and we owe it to them to take every measure possible to ensure the safest care environment," Banner Health CEO Peter Fine said in a company-wide email sent last week and quoted in the news release. "We are taking this step to reduce risk for our patients, their families, visitors and each other."

If providers feel strongly about the Delta Hospital's position on not requiring vaccine mandates (as I do), I encourage you to discuss it with your administrative team.

Dr. Sara Knutson