

August 2, 2021

Fellow Leaders:

Our community finds itself in another COVID surge; this one likely to be more intense than the last. The virus is doing what viruses do – they mutate into variants that can infect more people as quickly as possible. “Delta” is particularly effective – perhaps capable of infecting in less than 5 minutes of an exposure between individuals, compared to 15 minutes the other variants need.

There is an effective vaccine but currently, about half of our community has been vaccinated. That leaves half of our citizens (half the people at the grocery, half the people in the restaurant) unvaccinated and susceptible to serious illness, hospitalization, and death. These are the severe outcomes that COVID vaccines prevent with over 90% effectiveness. These are very good odds.

Based on state data, of the 2379 COVID related deaths between January 19, 2021 and June 30, all but 25 (99%) were in unvaccinated individuals.

What must we do as leaders?

1. Vaccinate! Continue to talk with people you care about – your family, friends, church, employees, etc. If your message isn’t being heard, find people who have influence over these groups of people and ask them to speak out. Now is the time. The next significant variant is likely to come after this surge and there is time.
2. Mask early, mask often, mask a lot! For the unvaccinated, masks work to reduce or eliminate the viral load you might inhale. Masks and social distancing of 6 feet still works to keep you safe. And if you are fortunate not to be very sick or asymptomatic, the masks keep you from unknowingly infecting others. For vaccinated citizens...Thank you! Masks help keep you from picking up more viral load and should you have an asymptomatic case (this means the vaccine is working for you), it keeps you from spreading virus.
3. The last strategy is to remember we are a community and should be putting some of our personal energy toward the common good. Healthcare workers do just that. As they have done since April 2020, our doctors, nurses, and all other healthcare workers, will care for those afflicted. But they are not beginning this part of the COVID journey with “fresh legs.” They are heroic but fatigued. Please take advantage of the vaccine so you can be well and stay well. That is the best way of thanking them for what they do.

Vaccinate. Mask. Lead.



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