

## **Arizona COVID-19 cases**

The Arizona Department of Health Services has reported 87,425 positive COVID-19 cases and 54,757 cases in Maricopa County as of July 2, 2020. Out of the 735,496 COVID-19 tests completed to date in Arizona, 10.3% have tested positive for the virus. Percent positive is the number of people with a positive test result, out of all the people COVID-19 tested completed in Arizona.

In Maricopa County, 2,645 patients (5%) have been admitted to a hospital and 591 (1%) admitted to an ICU since the county began collecting data on Jan. 22. People aged 65 or older or those who have at least one chronic health condition make up 70% of those who have been hospitalized and 92% of deaths for COVID-19. Nearly 65% of all COVID-19 infections reported have been among those under 45 years old.

## **Medical update from Dr. William Ellert, Chief Medical Officer**

I want to again thank everyone for the care they are providing to all of our patients throughout Arizona. As of July 1 at our Carondelet and Abrazo Hospitals we have 238 confirmed COVID positive patients and 109 patients under investigation (PUIs). Of this number there are currently 170 confirmed positive patients and 87 PUIs in the Abrazo system and 68 confirmed positives and 22 PUIs in the Carondelet system. Of these patients, 41 in Phoenix and 21 in Tucson are requiring mechanical ventilation. Needless to say, all hospital systems are feeling the stress of this surge and I continue to be impressed with how our medical staff, nurses, respiratory therapists and other allied health professionals and support staff are managing the increased demand and providing the highest quality of care to our patients. To date, our two markets have cared for a total of 1,872 COVID positive patients.

As you all know, people with COVID-19 have a wide range of symptoms and severity levels ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness and even death. Symptoms may appear anywhere for 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Some of the symptoms that people are experiencing include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. Hence, this infection can be confused with many other types of infections or illnesses. This is the reason why universal precautions of masking and hand hygiene across our community remain so important. As health care professionals we must continue to advocate for this and demonstrate it by our actions.

Supportive care along with dexamethasone, convalescent plasma and remdesivir remain the mainstay for treatment of this infection. I have included updates on the treatment recommendations in other communications. Dexamethasone is the one treatment that has been shown to actually decrease mortality in these patients, and fortunately we have an adequate supply of this medication. We continue to offer convalescent plasma under the Mayo protocol. Remdesivir has generally been available in recent weeks, but the supply of this is dependent on the allocations our hospitals have received from the state. Starting July 1, 2020, hospitals will be responsible for purchasing remdesivir. At this point, however, the allocation to the hospitals will continue to be based on historic patient volumes using essentially the same algorithm that was used when the supply was received from the state. Hence, the availability of remdesivir will continue to be limited. Studies have shown that patients benefit the most from this medication if it is started prior to the need for mechanical ventilation and during the earlier stage of the illness. We would ask that our physicians continue to be good stewards of this medication, using it for those patients who will receive the greatest benefit.

Again, thank you for the great care that you provide to our mutual patients. It is truly appreciated.

## **Take charge of coronavirus anxiety**

As we all are even too exhausted to find resources for ourselves through the constant changes of COVID and the stress of our work, we wanted to share with you some helpful resources. We also welcome any suggestions you have as we navigate through some of the toughest times that I can remember ever having. As always, we have the Employee Assistance program that has many confidential resources

available both online and in person. I strongly recommend connecting with EAP for any concerns or needs you have big and small.



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### Reminder of measures to take to protect yourself and others

We continue to closely monitor the outbreak of COVID-19 in our community, and work with state and local public health authorities. As an Abrazo employee, your health and wellbeing is our priority, and we have implemented strict measures at work to protect our staff, physicians, patients and community. The measures we take in the workplace are guided by the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and similar measures should be applied outside of work to protect yourself and slow community spread.

To best protect yourself, your loved ones, and others, I wanted to take a moment and reiterate some best practices to follow when you are not at the hospital:

- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick** - this includes those in your home who may be symptomatic. When possible, even at home, try to maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and others who live in the household.
- **Maintain a safe social distance** - between yourself and those outside of your home. It is important to remember that even those who are asymptomatic may be able to spread the virus to others.
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others** – Everyone should wear a face covering while in a public space. While wearing the face covering, maintain social distance – the face cover is not a substitution for social distancing!
- **Cover coughs and sneezes** - especially if you are around others and do not have your face covering on. Always try to cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or use the inside of your elbow. If you use a tissue, immediately throw used tissues in the trash and wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- **Clean and disinfect all frequently touched spaces daily** - at home and at work. This can include tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, toilets, faucets, and sinks. If any surfaces are dirty, first clean them with soap and water followed by a household disinfectant.
- **Monitor your health** - You will continue to go through our hospital health screening process when you come to work, but you should continue to monitor your health on days off. Be mindful of symptoms such as fever, shortness of breath, or other common symptoms associated with COVID-19. If symptoms develop, take your temperature and contact the employee health hotline at 602-246-5597.

For additional resources available to you, please visit the [CDC website](#) for more information and tips on what to do if you are sick, what to do if someone in your house gets sick, and a list of frequently asked questions.

It is everyone's responsibility to help stop the spread of COVID-19. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to our hospital, patients, and community.

### Incident Command email

Do you have a suggestion or feedback related to the hospital's pandemic response? Please email questions or suggestions to [IncidentCommand@abrazohealth.com](mailto:IncidentCommand@abrazohealth.com). Your message will be routed to the appropriate person to evaluate and respond.



# Take Charge of Coronavirus Anxiety

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The coronavirus (also called COVID-19) is in the news daily, with the number of cases rising and varied health recommendations based on location. It is increasingly important to stay focused and take measure of your situation and feelings. Normally you are a person who manages life's ups and downs with relative ease, but this news is causing you stress and generally hindering your daily life.

An evolving, ongoing event such as the threat of a health emergency can cause people to feel anxiety, even when they normally don't. Symptoms of anxiety include:

- Intense worry
- Fatigue
- Panic
- Obsession
- Nightmares
- Muscle tension
- Headaches
- Sleep problems
- Rapid heart rate
- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- Sweating

The good news is that there are steps you can take to address your anxiety around the coronavirus or any other stressful situation.

Take control of the situation. There are preventive measures you can take to limit your susceptibility to the coronavirus, such as washing your hands; not touching your eyes, nose and mouth; and disinfecting your home and work area. For more suggestions, refer to the [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC) and [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) websites.

Take care of yourself. Eat nutritious food, exercise, limit alcohol consumption and make sleep a priority. Stay connected with family and friends so that you're not socially isolated. Stay informed by learning the facts. The news isn't always accurate. Be sure to get your information from authoritative sources, such as the [CDC](#) and the [WHO](#).

Think about the impact you have on others. Be sure to care for yourself and take preventative measures more seriously. Communicating with family and friends about those measures is a form

of positively affecting others.

Limit your media exposure to coronavirus news. Today's news cycle is 24 hours, and the exposure can be overwhelming, regardless of the topic.

Let it go. Don't dwell on what may or may not happen regarding the coronavirus. Change what you can and let the rest take its course. Refocus your mind and think only about positive things.

If your stress and anxiety persist in spite of taking these recommended steps, contact your company's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or your primary care physician who may refer you to a behavioral health specialist.

Another option is to call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration's Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990, a 24/7, 365 day-a-year, free national hotline that provides immediate crisis counseling. It is toll-free, multilingual and confidential.

***By Beacon Health Options***

Call:

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