COVID Update 12-16-2020

Student Health Services (SHS) continues to offer Tele-Health/Triage services to students.
Please contact us at medicalSHS@pasadena.edu or call us at 626-585-7244 (messages only).
We will respond to your inquiry during our business hours, Monday – Thursday 8:30a-4:30p, Friday 8:30a-12:30p.

When You Get a Vaccine, Consider Getting V-safe Too

The clinical trials supporting the emergency use authorizations for the emerging COVID vaccines involved thousands of participants, and have found the usual local (redness, swelling, pain) and systemic (fever, chills, fatigue, headache, muscle, and joint pain) side effects which are usually seen within three days of vaccination and resolve spontaneously over 1-2 days. Experience tells us that when any vaccine is given to millions of people you can expect to discover other side effects that were simply too rare to be picked up in the clinical trials.

There are existing tools for capturing adverse events with vaccines, although they are largely "passive," dependent on patients or providers initiating reports. The CDC and FDA have developed *V-safe*, a smartphone-based active monitoring program for COVID vaccine side effects. It will use text messaging and web surveys to check in with vaccine recipients who enroll.

These check-ins will occur daily for the first week after vaccination, then weekly for 6 weeks and finally at 3, 6 and 12 months after vaccination. The check-in process resets if the vaccine you receive requires a second dose. If you report a clinically important health impact, a CDC representative will contact you by phone and take a report if appropriate. To learn more about *V-safe* go to www.cdc.gov/vsafe. When you get a COVID vaccine, you should be given documentation of the vaccine you receive and an information sheet with the link to the *V-safe* website where you can enroll. *V-safe* will also remind you when you are due for a second dose for all 2 dose vaccines.

Getting a Vaccine Won't Mean Ditch Your Mask, At Least Not Yet

We know that the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are highly effective at preventing COVID illness, but that's not the same thing as preventing infection. If vaccinated people can still be infected with COVID, even with no symptoms, they can also be infectious to other people if the load of virus they carry is high enough.

We may have a better idea of the frequency of infection after vaccination when Pfizer tests some, and Moderna tests all, clinical trial participants for evidence of COVID infection by looking for antibodies to the N protein of the COVID virus. Because the vaccines generate antibodies to the spike protein and not the N protein, anybody with N protein antibodies has been infected by COVID. The Johnson & Johnson vaccine trial intends to analyze antibody content not only in blood but also in saliva; if antibody levels in saliva are as high as those in blood, it may bode well for fending off COVID infection in mucosal tissues including the nose. Even a reduction in the amount of virus replicating in the nose would reduce the risk of transmission to other people.

Don't Forget CA Notify

CA Notify provides anonymous notification to you if you may have been in contact with a person who has a positive COVID test. If you enable CA Notify on your phone and a person with a newly diagnosed COVID case enters the verification code from their positive test results, then you will receive anonymous notification of possible exposure based on the random codes exchanged between enabled devices. The system is a voluntary and completely anonymous way to help alert people to possible exposure. Go to https://canotify.ca.gov/ for more information.

Quick Links to Resources

- If you are looking for a test because you had close contact with a suspected/confirmed case, you need to quarantine: ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine
- If you are looking for a test because you have symptoms, you need to isolate: ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation
- Free testing by appointment (walk-up and drive-up) https://covid19.lacounty.gov/testing/
    - Scroll all the way down to read about home testing with a mailed kit – discusses eligibility and detailed steps to complete the process
    - Also see pop-up testing dates/sites designed for people without a car
- Testing links at Pasadena Public Health https://www.cityofpasadena.net/public-health/covid-19-testing-info/

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