



Hospitalists are on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are caring for the full range of hospitalized COVID-19 patients—from those requiring ventilators and fighting for their lives to those who can be discharged to recover at home. We've seen many successes—patients (including fellow hospitalists, our friends and colleagues) recovering and going home-- and many whose lives will dramatically change as a result of contracting COVID-19. We've also been the only person in the room of grandparents, parents, brothers and sisters, and children who lost their lives to the pandemic, and because of the insidious nature of the disease, their last days were in isolation. This pandemic is wreaking havoc in communities nationwide and hospitalists are holding the line—we are both physically and mentally exhausted, but we will continue to provide the best care possible for you if and when you need it. However, we need your help.

Every person in the nation has a critical role in responding to the pandemic.

Mask up. Every time you leave the house, put a mask on. Much of the spread today is from people who are pre- or asymptomatic and if they had worn a mask, they would be have been less likely to spread the disease. When we go to work in the hospital, we wear masks routinely and know they are safe to wear. Tests show that wearing face masks does not lower blood oxygen levels or raise blood carbon dioxide levels. Wearing disposable surgical-type masks or clean cloth face coverings does not increase the risk of bacterial lung infection. Are masks uncomfortable? Yes. Do they save lives? Yes. Please wear one.

Keep your distance. We miss seeing our friends and family, too. When we need to see our loved ones, we do it with a combination of physical distance and mask wearing. Many of our COVID-19 patients report getting sick from someone close to them—from going to a small gathering of friends and family or seeing friends at a bar or restaurant. Social distancing works to prevent the spread of COVID-19, especially when combined with wearing masks.

Protect your kids. Many hospitalists have young kids and teens at home and like any parent, we are constantly worried about their safety. While we are thankful that most children do very well with COVID-19, there are some that may get very sick during or even after a coronavirus infection. Teach your kids how to wear masks, stay socially distanced and other strategies to keep themselves and others safe.

As hospitalists, we want to keep our communities healthy and safe. We get up and go to work each day to care for hospitalized patients and have been heartened by the rallying of many communities across the country. We have seen how taking simple precautions can save lives and prevent the spread of this serious disease and how failure to do so can result in sickness and death. Join us in continuing the fight to stop COVID-19.