

# Fox Valley Hospitals: Urge vaccination to prevent critical strain on hospitals, clinics, healthcare workers

Posted on Thursday, Sep 23, 2021

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**Fox Valley, Wis.** – Hospitals and healthcare facilities throughout the Fox Valley Region are experiencing an increased number of patients with COVID-19 and asking the community to get vaccinated to reduce the spread and help end this pandemic. COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective at preventing serious illness and death.

The climbing COVID-19 cases across the nine counties of the Fox Valley Healthcare Emergency Readiness Coalition (FVHERC) have placed an undue burden on our healthcare workers. Hospitals and health systems in the FVHERC, including Advocate Aurora Health, Agnesian HealthCare, Ascension Wisconsin and ThedaCare are asking for the community's help to change course and get infections under control.

Using a multi-layered approach to protect ourselves and each other is recommended by the American Medical Association, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and countless other medical professional societies. This includes:

- **Get a COVID-19 vaccination.** It's the best way to protect yourself and those around you. Vaccinations are safe and effective.
- Wear a mask in public, regardless of vaccination status
- Practice social distancing
- Avoid large gatherings, especially indoors
- Wash hands often with soap and water
- Stay home if you're feeling sick, avoid people who are sick

- Get your flu shot early

From August 1 to September 21, 2021, the total number of COVID-19 hospitalizations increased six-fold in the Fox Valley region. In that same timeframe, there were five times the number of COVID-19 intensive care unit (ICU) hospitalizations.

More than 90% of patients being treated in Fox Valley hospitals for COVID-19 are not vaccinated. Many of these patients are in the 30-50 age range, as opposed to the older patients we saw earlier in the pandemic.

While the volume in the facilities is a mixture of COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 patients, a rise in preventable COVID-19 admissions is a driving factor.

Area emergency departments are experiencing record high patient volumes due to a variety of community health needs. This may lead to extended wait times. If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms but wish to be tested, please seek testing from a community testing site.

### **WHERE TO GET VACCINATED:**

- Make an appointment with your local healthcare provider
- Visit the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services website](#)
- [Visit Vaccines.gov](#) or call 1-800-232-0233 to find a location closest to you

### **HOW TO GET TESTED**

In addition to the COVID-19 vaccine, to help manage community spread of COVID-19, testing is critical. Testing gives health systems insight into the breadth and depth of those infected in our communities and helps us better understand the spread of the virus. FVHERC encourages community members to be tested if they are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19. Please do not visit local emergency departments for COVID-19 testing. Call 2-1-1 or visit the [Wisconsin Department of Health Services website](#) to find a community testing location near you.