

Autumn Occupational Medicine Newsletter



October 8, 2020



Atascadero



Pismo Beach



Santa Maria



How Dignity Health Urgent Care Centers Are Staying Vigilant During The Pandemic

Our providers are staying informed about the latest COVID-19 guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and both Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties specific regulations to help our community during this difficult time.

Mark Pomerantz, MD of Dignity Health Urgent Care, Santa Maria participates in weekly conference calls with the Santa Barbara County Health Department and local health care providers. On a recent virtual meeting in September he shared his expertise surrounding the protocols in place for screening and testing symptomatic patients at our urgent care centers. Dr. Pomerantz discussed the specific algorithms in place for identifying, screening, testing, treating and referring patients with COVID-19 concerns. Dr. Pomerantz has been working closely with local employers who have experienced outbreaks, including Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Department and Lompoc Federal Correctional Institute employees.

Similarly, Lisa Vasak, MD of Dignity Health Urgent Care, Atascadero has been testing, treating and helping our local community during the COVID-19 pandemic. In September, Dr. Vasak addressed members of the Atascadero Chamber of Commerce in the *Ask the Expert Coffee Talk Series*, discussing the dual epidemics of Influenza and COVID-19 that could pose complications this fall. Dr. Vasak urged everyone over the age of six months, without a contraindication, to get a flu shot, preferably by October 31st.

All our Urgent Care centers offer Flu Vaccines, no appointment needed. For more information on our Urgent Care Centers call 805.862.3961 or visit

[DignityHealth.org/centralcoast/urgentcare](https://www.DignityHealth.org/centralcoast/urgentcare).



Remind Your Employees It's Time For A Flu Shot

Click on the resource below to download a FLU flyer

Protect Against the Flu

The flu virus remains one of the Top 10 leading causes of death each year in the US, and this is especially concerning during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Now more than ever, it is important that you protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community against the flu by following these recommended safety precautions:

- Get the flu vaccine
- Avoid close contact with those who are sick and stay home if you are
- Wear a mask when in public
- Use your elbow to cover cough and sneezes
- Wash hands thoroughly for 20-seconds and carry hand sanitizer with you to use frequently
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth
- Disinfect surfaces
- Ensure you are maintaining a physical distance of 6ft in public spaces

What you need to know:

The symptoms of COVID-19 and the flu are very similar. For this reason, it is important to get the flu vaccination. Up to 20% of people who have COVID also have the flu and other respiratory illnesses. By vaccinating against the flu, you are protecting yourself from getting both the flu and COVID-19 virus at the same time. If you do get the flu, the vaccination should lessen the severity of your symptoms.

Symptoms to watch out for:



Chills



Cough/Congestion (allergy-like symptoms)



Fatigue



Fever



Headache



Muscle and Body Aches



Nausea



Shortness of Breath



Sore Throat

The CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against flu. While the flu shot is really important for high-risk populations such as infants, the elderly, and those with underlying or chronic health conditions, everyone can benefit from an annual flu vaccination.

Be sure to talk with your physician or clinical provider to understand how the flu shot can protect you and others this flu season.

Protecting Workers From COVID-19 On The Job

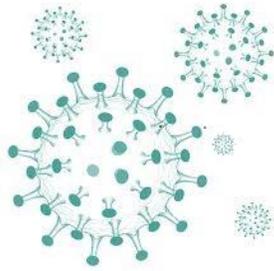
The California Department of Public Health's [webpage](#) provides information for workers and employers about the evolving coronavirus pandemic. It includes links to the websites of major workplace health and safety agencies and organizations where you can find guidance and other resources for preventing work-related COVID-19.



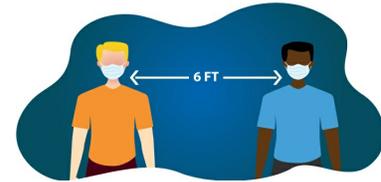
What ALL employers should do to prevent the spread of COVID-19 at your workplace:

- 1) Check for industry-specific guidance in the resources below.
- 2) Perform a detailed risk assessment of all work areas and tasks, create a site-specific COVID-19 prevention plan, and designate a person with the responsibility to implement it.
- 3) Train employees on everything they need to know about COVID-19 and how to prevent it from spreading. This includes [COVID-19 symptoms to watch for](#) and when to stay home.
- 4) Set up procedures to check and keep anyone with symptoms or recent close contact with a COVID-19 patient out of the workplace. Adopt policies such as paid sick leave that support this critical step for preventing outbreaks at work.
- 5) Take steps to ensure physical distancing of at least six feet between workers and others. This includes providing physical barriers and virtual options for meetings. Modify work processes, schedules, and breaks to prevent workers from congregating.
- 6) Make sure employees always wear [face coverings](#) when they are around other people (except when they must wear respirators). Provide any other necessary protective equipment such as eye protection or gloves.
- 7) Put protocols in place for cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces.
- 8) [Be prepared to respond immediately](#) if anyone at the worksite has or may have COVID-19. Work with the local health department to assess who may have been exposed, test employees where indicated, and take additional steps to control the spread of disease.

See Cal/OSHA and Statewide Industry Guidance on COVID-19 for more information and to find guidelines for specific industries.



COVID-19 Resources



We know that keeping you and your employees safe is a top priority so Dignity Health Urgent Care encourages you to turn to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for the most updated resources regarding COVID-19 at the workplace. Dignity Health also offers a COVID-19 information line.

Dignity Health COVID-19 Information line

(805) 332-8276 English
(805) 614-5758 Spanish

Visit your county websites:

ReadySLO.org or
Countyofsb.org

Visit CDC Website

Visit OSHA Website

Visit Dignity Health Urgent Care Occupational Medicine Website

For the most up-to-date information on COVID-19, please visit www.dignityhealth.org/phc.



Workers Compensation CEO's Look to Future System Efficiencies Based On COVID-19 Lessons

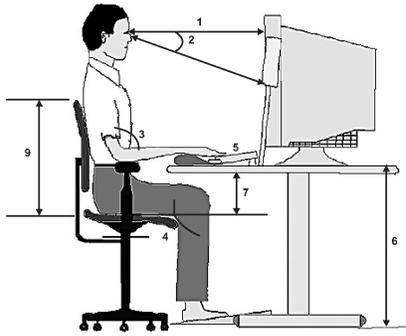
9/23/20 by Nancy Grover
Sarasota, FL (WorkersCompensation.com)

The shock of dealing with the coronavirus has largely abated for workers' compensation industry stakeholders. Now, seven plus months into the pandemic, the focus is more on the future and incorporating lessons learned. That's the view from the heads of four major workers' compensation organizations who met for the second time since the pandemic began.

"Last time we talked five months ago, we were all reacting to some pretty dire circumstances. We were being bombarded with directives from 50 states and nationally," said Mark Wilhelm, CEO of Safety National. "Now it's still chaotic, but perhaps a little less chaotic."



Read more...



Physical Therapist
Brittany Jones, PT,
DPT, is also certified
in an advanced
ergonomics. Need on-
site ergonomic
assessments?
[E-mail your interest
here](#)

New Data Shows COVID-19 Accounts For One In Nine California Workers' Comp Claims In 2020

9/28/20

Oakland, CA ([WorkersCompensation.com](https://www.workerscompensation.com))

The California Workers' Compensation COVID-19 claim count continued to grow in August, albeit at a much slower rate than in July, with new data showing that as of September 21, the state had recorded 5,130 COVID-19 claims with August injury dates, bringing the total for the year to 41,861 claims, or 11.2% of all California job injury claims reported for accident year (AY) 2020. Those claims included 224 death claims, up from 160 reported as of August 10.



[Read more...](#)

Fall Updates from Dr. Vasak: Stay well, get a flu shot

Fight The Flu



by Lisa Vasak, MD Dignity Health Urgent Care-
Atascadero

October is here! The month with both a Harvest Moon and a Blue Moon. The month everybody should be getting their flu shot! It is more important than ever to visit your primary care provider, urgent care or pharmacy to get your flu shot. The southern hemisphere had a light flu season but the experts are not convinced the northern hemisphere will be as lucky. Therefore, along with continued masking and social distancing the flu shot will help to prevent a Twindemic of Influenza and COVID- 19. The recommendation is to get your flu shot by October 31st. Luckily, there is plenty of flu shot doses so it should be easily available. It is an inactive virus. Therefore, you can't get the flu from the flu shot! Stay healthy!

EVENTS



Want to meet with our providers to talk about your business needs? [Sign up here](#) for a virtual meeting with Dr. Pomerantz or Dr. Vasak.

SAFETY FIRST

THINK SAFE
WORK SAFE



Services at a Glance

Employment Examinations:

Physicals including DOT/DMV, Fitness for Duty Exams

Respirator Exams:

Respirator and mask fit, currently subject to availability of supplies due to COVID-19

Drug Screening:

Pre-employment, reasonable suspicion, post accident, random, E-screen 5 and 10 panel

Breath Alcohol Testing:

Pre, post, random or cause

Vaccinations:

Hep A, Hep B, Flu, Tetanus, T-dap, Rabies

Testing Services:

Pulmonary function, audio, vision, grip, TB tests

Work Injuries:

Back and neck injuries, lacerations and burns, eye injuries, extremity injuries, all minor trauma

Advanced ergonomics: on-site available

Meet Our Providers



Mark Pomerantz, MD

Dignity Health Urgent Care, Santa Maria
Dr. Pomerantz has been practicing medicine for more than 35 years in the Santa Maria community. He earned his Doctor of Medicine from the USC School of Medicine. He has experience in Occupational Medicine and Workers Compensation cases.



Lisa Vasak, MD

Dignity Health Urgent Care, Atascadero
Dr. Vasak has been practicing medicine for more than 25 years in California and on the Central Coast since 2013. She is Board Certified in Internal Medicine and earned her Doctor of Medicine from New York Medical College. She specializes in Urgent Care, and has experience in the areas of Occupational Medicine and Workers Compensation cases.



Guy Zimbardi, MD

Dignity Health Urgent Care, Pismo Beach and Santa Maria
Dr. Zimbardi has been practicing medicine for more than 23 years in both New York City and Southern California. He is Board Certified in Occupational Medicine, earning his Doctor of Medicine from Boston University and his Masters degree in Public Health from the University of Pittsburgh.

[Click here to email Corinne Friedling, Manager of Business Integration at Dignity Health, for your Occupational Medicine questions or needs.](#)



5920 West Mall, Atascadero **805-461-2131**
877 Oak Park Blvd, Pismo Beach **805-474-8450**
2271 South Depot Street Santa Maria **805-614-9000**