



Welcome to the **December 2020** issue of *OCMA Connect*, our monthly publication focusing on issues specific to Orange County physicians. We hope you enjoy our newsletter and we welcome your input. Please send your comments, ideas or questions to Holly Appelbaum at happelbaum@ocma.org.



Message from OCMA Executive Director, Jim Peterson



Closing out 2020 - Hope for 2021

To say 2020 has been a unique year would be an understatement bordering on silly. No doubt there have been great challenging times for our country in the past, but probably not since the late 1960s has **there been so much uncertainty, division and challenges on so many fronts all at the same time**. Most prominent, of course, is the current pandemic of COVID-19. It has upended our healthcare system, our economy, affected millions and took the lives of hundreds of thousands. It brought the worst out in so many people - challenging science and facts, threatening public health officials and healthcare workers, and showing total disrespect for the well-being and health of other people in not following common-sense recommendations.

It also **brought out the best in us**. Healthcare professionals, including our **physician members**, still on the **front lines helping to care for and save the lives of so many at the same time putting their own health and lives at risk**. Teachers, first responders, grocery store workers - essential workers from so many professions and businesses still doing what they do to serve the community. We've learned new ways to hold meetings and conduct business, proven the importance of Telehealth as a valuable part of healthcare delivery. We've also slowed the pace down a bit, appreciating the simpler things in life, probably due to the fact that there is little else to do and not many places to go.

But now a vaccine is on the scene, perhaps we can begin the long road to control this virus and work our way back to some sense of normalcy. Lots of events and activities were put on hold or canceled during 2020, lots of special moments missed by so many. January 1, 2021 will probably look a lot like December 31, 2020...it is not quite as simple as turning the calendar. **But as we work our way through the new year, there is hope and we all should be optimistic of better days ahead.**

On behalf of OCMA, **thank you for your membership, support and engagement.**
Happy Holidays to you and your families.

Phased Approach to COVID-19 Vaccine Allocation

Below is the National Academy of Sciences' phased-in approach to COVID-19 vaccine allocation, which is being used by the Orange County Health Care Agency.

Please note that **healthcare workers including all physicians are in Phase I.** Plans and logistics to reach the various levels of healthcare professionals (non hospital based, community-based, independent practitioners, etc.) are being created and under review. **Specific time tables will be determined by the availability of the vaccine and the resources to administer the program.**

OCMA will continue to provide information on the COVID-19 vaccine as we receive it from the Orange County Health Care Agency.

A Phased Approach to Vaccine Allocation for COVID-19

PHASES OF VACCINE ALLOCATION			
PHASE 1 Phase 1a "Jumpstart Phase": <ul style="list-style-type: none">• High-risk health workers• First responders Phase 1b: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• People of all ages with comorbid and underlying conditions that put them at significantly higher risk• Older adults living in congregate or overcrowded settings	PHASE 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• K-12 teachers and school staff and child care workers• Critical workers in high-risk settings—workers who are in industries essential to the functioning of society and at substantially higher risk of exposure• People of all ages with comorbid and underlying conditions that put them at moderately higher risk• People in homeless shelters or group homes for individuals with disabilities, including serious mental illness, developmental and intellectual disabilities, and physical disabilities or in recovery, and staff who work in such settings• All older adults not included in Phase 1	PHASE 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Young adults• Children• Workers in industries and occupations important to the functioning of society and at increased risk of exposure not included in Phase 1 or 2	PHASE 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone residing in the United States who did not receive the vaccine in previous phases
Equity is a crosscutting consideration In each population group, vaccine access should be prioritized for geographic areas identified through CDC's Social Vulnerability Index or another more specific index.			
			

OCMA Has PPE Available

The **OCMA has a supply of PPE** at our Newport Beach office, to serve as **backup** for **Orange County Solo and Small Group practices** who are in short supply of the following items:

- N95 Mask
- Surgical Mask
- Face Shield
- Goggles
- Isolation gown
- Coveralls
- Hand Sanitizer
- Vinyl Gloves (Medium and Large Size Only)

While supplies last and for pickup only, please **email Mark Morones** to coordinate an appointment for pickup - mmorones@ocma.org.

**O.C. Health Care Agency
Launches "Who Should I Get Tested
For?" Campaign**



By: Clayton Chau, MD, PhD

**Agency Director
County Health Officer
Orange County Health Care Agency**

With Christmas, and other seasonal holidays upon us, the OC Health Care Agency (HCA) is reminding County residents to **avoid usual large family gatherings** this year in order **to protect** themselves, their loved ones, and their neighbors **from the spread of COVID-19.**

Launching a new marketing and advertising campaign, "**Who Should You Get Tested For?**" HCA wants to remind residents to **protect the people they love** by wearing a face covering, washing their hands often, staying at least six feet apart, and accessing the **County's COVID-19 testing network to get a COVID-19 test.** The ads feature framed pictures of various families and point out that you can get free single-swab testing for both the flu and COVID-19 at the OC Super Sites.

Orange County has several options for people who can't get a COVID-19 test from their health care provider.

* **The OC Super Sites** in Anaheim and Costa Mesa offer free flu and COVID-19 tests with one-swab testing.

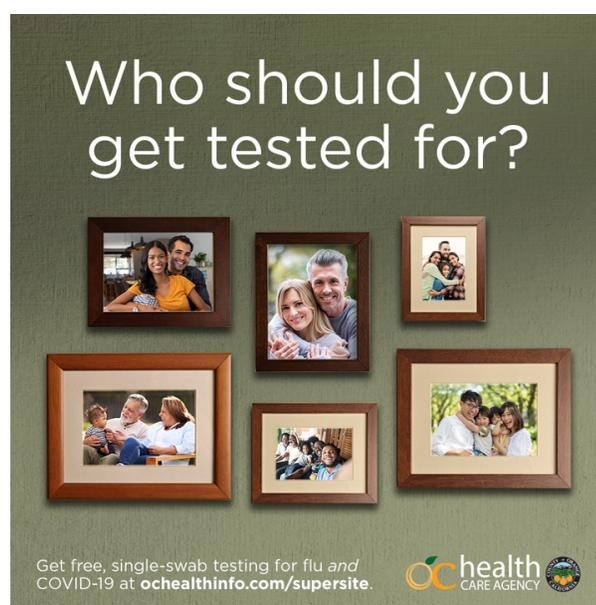
* **OptumServe (State) test sites** in Buena Park, Orange, Santa Ana offer free COVID-19 tests for symptomatic and asymptomatic essential workers and residents who think they may have been exposed to the virus.

* And just this week, HCA, in partnership with **Ambry Genetics, launched at-home saliva-based COVID-19 test kits.**

* For a full list of other testing options, please visit ohealthinfo.com/covidtest. Print ads in newspapers, bus wraps, bus shelters, digital web banners, billboards, and digital boards at the John Wayne Airport in English, Spanish and Vietnamese are all part of the campaign and drive people to ohealthinfo.com/covidtest.

County officials and the OC Health Care Agency continue to see an increase in the number of lab-confirmed COVID-19 cases, aligning with state and national trends. Cooler weather and the holidays will push case counts even higher if proper precautions are not implemented.

This is simply not the time to get together with your grandparents and all your aunts, uncles and cousins over the holidays. Family traditions may be able to resume next year, but we must be creative in 2020. Send your famous fruitcake or sugar cookies as a care package. We want to see all those smiling faces in our picture frames around the table next year!



For more information on where to get tested for COVID-19, and what to do after a positive test result, please visit: ohealthinfo.com/covidtest.

County Prepares for First Allocation of COVID-19 Vaccine



County of Orange health officials began receiving doses of the Pfizer-manufactured COVID-19 vaccine this week. **The Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA) will distribute this initial supply to Orange County (OC) hospitals for prioritization of their high-risk health care workers as part of Phase 1a** of a multi-phased plan developed through the CDPH Community Vaccine Advisory Committee.

As more doses of the vaccine become available, a greater portion of the Phase 1a population can anticipate vaccine availability in late December. This includes residents of long-term care facilities, which includes skilled nursing facilities and assisted living facilities, who will coordinate obtaining doses through national retail pharmacies being supplied by the CDC. **The COVID-19 vaccine is likely to become more readily accessible to the general public in spring 2021.**

To view the CDPH Community Vaccine Advisory Committee's Phase 1a Guidelines for California Local Health Departments, please [click here](#).

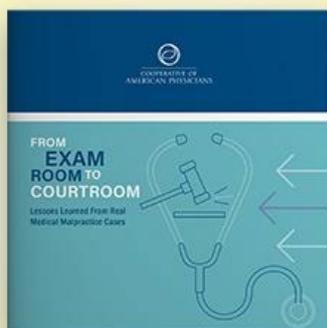
To view the latest vaccine information from HCA, please [click here](#).

New and Noteworthy: Books by OCMA Members

Many OCMA members are physicians who write more than prescriptions. OCMA has dedicated this space to promote new releases by OCMA members.



If you are a member of OCMA who recently has released a book that you would like to announce here, please forward your name, the title of your book and website for the book to Holly Appelbaum at happelbaum@ocma.org.



Learn About Common Risks of Medical Malpractice Lawsuits. Request Your Free Guide!

Protect Your Practice from the Common Risks of Medical Malpractice Lawsuits

The Cooperative of American Physicians (CAP) recognizes that managing liability risk in the medical practice is critical to practice success. In CAP's recent publication, ***From Exam Room to Courtroom: Lessons Learned from Real Medical Malpractice Cases***, we have compiled 10 real-life case studies of physicians who have been involved in medical malpractice legal disputes. Authored by Gordon Ownby, General Counsel at CAP, these malpractice case studies impart important lessons in risk management that physicians don't necessarily learn in medical school, but acquire as they practice medicine.

[Download the Guide](#)

From Exam Room to Courtroom focuses on three common areas of liability:

- * Physician misjudgment
- * Gaps in communication and documentation

* Oversights during specialist referrals

Learn how you can lessen your chances of experiencing a medical malpractice lawsuit. [Download](#) your free book today.

As a leading provider of superior medical malpractice coverage in California for more than 40 years, the Cooperative of American Physicians (CAP) remains committed to providing physicians with secure and affordable protection and relevant practice and risk management resources to help you run a safe and successful practice.

To learn more about becoming a CAP member, please **contact Tom Mortimer at 213-473-8790** or via email at TMortimer@CAPphysicians.com. **Request an Instant Quote** today to learn how much you can save on medical malpractice coverage with CAP.



OCMA-Sponsored Workers' Compensation Insurance

Members save an additional 5% on their premiums! Click or call 800-842-3761.

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Business Partner Profile Mercer

The **Orange County Medical Association works with Mercer** as the broker and plan administrator for the **sponsored insurance programs**. Mercer offers best-in-class insurance to protect you, your practice, and your family!

OCMA works with Mercer and the insurance carriers to design and implement insurance plans that **meet the coverage needs of physician members**. Help support the practice of medicine by purchasing your insurance through OCMA's sponsored program. The following is a **brief overview of the insurance plans available to assist you:**

- * Workers' Compensation
- * Small Group Health Insurance
- * Cyber Liability
- * Individual and Family Health Insurance
- * Business Owners Package
- * Level Term Life Insurance
- * AssistPlus Travel Assistance
- * Long-Term Care
- * Long-Term Disability
- * Dental, and more!

Contact Mercer for more information regarding your specific situation and needs, and to find out how you can increase coverage, reduce premiums, or both today!

Visit CountyCMAMemberInsurance.com,
E-mail CMACounty.Insurance.service@mercer.com or
Call a **Client Advisor at (800) 842-3761**

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