

August 20, 2021

Dear Middle Tennessee Residents,

The past 18 months have been difficult on all of us. There has been a great deal of sacrifice, loss, anguish, and broken hearts surrounding COVID-19. We are all ready to put the pandemic behind us, but unfortunately, we are unable to move forward. Rather than COVID-19 rates dropping as the vaccine became more readily available, we are moving in the opposite direction. A year ago, we didn't have a solution to end the pandemic. Now the key is readily available, within our hands, but we need everyone's help to resolve this. The answer is through vaccines.

As the healthcare systems of Middle Tennessee, we are banding together in one unified voice to ask you, to beg you, to get vaccinated against COVID-19. We have seen, firsthand, the unnecessary suffering this horrible disease wreaks on the human body. We have had many patients in our ICUs, with machines keeping them alive, who wished they had gotten the vaccine but at that point it's just too late. They, along with their families, are living with regret. Our caregivers are growing more and more saddened and frustrated that simple steps that could greatly reduce the loss of life are not being embraced.

Our clinical leaders strongly support the vaccine. They have studied the science behind it, and it is safe and effective. The likelihood of getting seriously ill, becoming hospitalized or even dying as a result of COVID-19 is greatly diminished if you are fully vaccinated. The large majority of those hospitalized with COVID-19 are not vaccinated.

If you are hesitant about receiving the vaccine, we encourage you to seek guidance and discuss your concerns with the medical community. Please consult your physician's office to talk through your questions. This will allow you to make an educated decision based on the information you receive. It is important to consult the experts to cut through the myths that surround the COVID-19 vaccine.

As healthcare systems, our goal is to be here when you need us regardless of the type of care you need. Unfortunately, COVID-19 hospitalizations in Middle Tennessee are escalating at a rate that threatens to overwhelm the healthcare system and compromise our ability to do just that. We all need to do our part to make sure that doesn't happen.

Across our health systems, more than 90% of people who are hospitalized due to COVID-19 are unvaccinated. Nearly all those patients could be safely at home with their friends and family right now if they had chosen to get the vaccine.



The most important thing we can do to prevent COVID-19, and eventually end this pandemic, is to get vaccinated. If you are fully vaccinated, thank you for protecting yourself, your loved ones and the community. If you are not, we strongly encourage you to get the vaccine. We need your help to save lives and to finally put this pandemic behind us.

Sincerely,
The Middle Tennessee Hospital Systems

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