

Banner Health joins Mayo Clinic, Dignity Health and others to spread "Mask Up" message

Wearing a face mask is best way to slow down surging COVID-19 pandemic



PHOENIX (Nov. 20, 2020) – Banner Health is pleased to join local health organizations Mayo Clinic and Dignity Health (CommonSpirit Health), as well as other top U.S. health systems, in a "Mask Up" promotion campaign designed to encourage everyone to wear a mask as protection for themselves and others against COVID-19.

Banner, Mayo and Dignity join 100 of the nation's top health care systems, representing thousands of hospitals in communities across the U.S., in spreading an urgent plea for all Americans to mask up, because wearing a facemask is the best way to slow the surging COVID-19 pandemic.

"The science has not changed. Masks slow the spread of COVID-19. So, please join us as we all embrace this simple ask: Wear. Care. Share with #MaskUp. Together, wearing is caring."

More than 11.5 million Americans have tested positive for the virus – including an additional one million in just the past week – leading to nearly 250,000 deaths.

The current trends are daunting and frightening. If the nation stays on its current course, hospital leaders are increasingly concerned that more health care facilities will be overwhelmed as shortages of healthy caregivers make it difficult to handle a rapidly increasing number of patients. Unfortunately, this is already happening in parts of the U.S.

Banner Health owns and operates 30 acute-care hospitals in six states and all are experiencing exponential growth of COVID-19. The increase of COVID-19 patients coupled with seasonal illnesses and the likelihood of large gatherings over the holidays represents a perfect storm that will lead to increased spread and deaths.

The next several months will be critical. Though there has been positive news about vaccine development, it is still unclear when those vaccines will be ready for widespread use. In the meantime, everyone must remain vigilant, take precautions and follow public health orders.

The country has reached a tipping point. The power to do what is right is now in the hands of everyone everywhere.

This week, a public service message ran in The New York Times, USA Today, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post and The Los Angeles Times. Additionally, hospitals and health systems across the country, like Banner, Dignity and Mayo, have united to share these messages regionally.

Our message is:

"As the top nationally ranked hospitals, we know it's tough that we all need to do our part and keep wearing masks. But, here's what we also know: The science has not changed. Masks slow the spread of COVID-19. So, please join us as we all embrace this simple ask: Wear. Care. Share with #MaskUp. Together, wearing is caring. And together, we are saving lives."

In an effort to reach a broader audience, the public service effort will also include messages on digital platforms, social media, online information, links to vital health resources and more. Combining resources demonstrates that these health organizations are working together, will accomplish this today and will get through this together.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention points to recent studies that have shown facemasks successfully limit spread of the COVID-19 virus. Wearing facemasks protects in key ways: by protecting the wearer against inhalation of harmful pathogens and particulates and by preventing exposure of those around the wearer.

In addition to masking, the CDC suggests that everyone minimize the number of non-household contacts, maintain a physical distance of at least six feet, and limit the amount of time around others, especially while indoors and in poorly ventilated areas. For further information about masking guidelines – how to choose a mask, how to properly wear a mask – visit the CDC website.

About Keep It Up. Mask Up.

Keep It Up. Mask Up. is a collaboration of 100 leading health systems representing thousands of hospitals across the U.S. joining together to create messages for the betterment of communities they serve. The impetus for this, and other public service campaigns to follow, came from a group of health care marketing and communications executives meeting for a decade and reengaged weekly since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The goal is to share knowledge and experience, best practices, strategies and resources- knowing they can accomplish more together. Founded and led by Rhoda Weiss, Ph.D., Los Angeles-based national health care leader and consultant, the expanded coalition is partnering with Cleveland Clinic Chief Marketing and Communications Officer Paul Matsen and his team for this effort. Additionally, hospitals and health systems on a regional basis continue to come together to send messages like these of prevention and safety, hope and healing, life and death, care and caring.

About Banner Health

Headquartered in Arizona, Banner Health is one of the largest nonprofit health care systems in the country. The system owns and operates 30 acute-care hospitals, two rehabilitation hospitals, Banner Health Network, Banner - University Medicine, academic and employed physician groups, long-term care centers, outpatient surgery centers and an array of other services; including Banner Urgent Care, family clinics, home care and hospice services, pharmacies and a nursing registry. Banner Health is in six states: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nebraska, Nevada and Wyoming. For more information, visit bannerhealth.com.

About Mayo Clinic

Mayo Clinic is a nonprofit organization committed to innovation in clinical practice, education and research, and providing compassion, expertise and answers to everyone who needs healing. Visit the [Mayo Clinic News Network](#) for additional Mayo Clinic news and Mayo Clinic Facts for more information about Mayo.

About Dignity Health

Dignity Health in Arizona includes seven acute care hospitals: Chandler Regional Medical Center, Mercy Gilbert Medical Center, St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center, St. Joseph's Westgate Hospital, Arizona General Hospital Laveen and Arizona General Hospital Mesa and Yavapai Regional Medical Center. It also includes world-renowned Barrow Neurological Institute. From this foundation, Dignity Health in Arizona has expanded into a comprehensive health care system, which includes clinics, specialty hospitals, urgent cares, insurance providers, an accountable care organization and other clinical partnerships. The Dignity Health Medical Group includes hundreds of physicians in Arizona and a wide range of specialties. Dignity Health in Arizona is part of CommonSpirit Health, one of the nation's largest health care systems.

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