

Let's celebrate with joy and gratitude this Thanksgiving

Posted on [November 3, 2021](#)

Originally published in Hideaway Lake News on November 1, 2021

After months of being cooped up, many of us reached the end of our tether during the holidays last year. We met up with families and friends to share a hug, a meal and a toast. But the price we paid was steep. We went through some of the most traumatic times last holiday season as we lost record numbers of people to COVID.

This Thanksgiving however, things are somewhat brighter, despite the havoc wreaked by the delta variant. We lost far fewer people than we otherwise would have because of the development of multiple safe and effective vaccines. Most vaccinated people are now able to socialize with their loved ones without fear of hospitalization and death. Kids are going back to school, people are returning to work, friends are gathering for parties and families are going on vacations. It is my fervent hope that deaths will continue to decrease and our lives will continue to go towards the normal that we all took for granted in the past.

More people are getting vaccinated each day as they see the safety and benefits. Boosters are now available for those who are at high risk, which includes people 65 years and older, and younger people with one or more chronic medical conditions. Pfizer vaccine boosters are now approved and it is possible that Moderna and Johnson & Johnson will soon have boosters approved as well. Boosters help further reduce the chance that you will get infected, not just prevent hospitalization and death. Sometimes, even though the COVID infection may not put you in hospital, it could tip a high risk person over the edge if they have serious underlying medical conditions like heart failure or atrial fibrillation. So a booster can really help those people.

Check with your doctor, especially if you are younger than 30, about the safest vaccine for you. There are extremely rare but serious side effects that you should be aware of such as inflammation of the heart and blood clots depending on your age and gender. Other fears such as infertility in women have proven unfounded. Pregnant women are at much higher risk of complications from COVID, so please talk with your doctor about vaccination if you're planning to get pregnant or currently pregnant. Overall, the vaccine continues to be a very safe preventive option for almost all of us.

Natural immunity in those who have recovered from COVID appears to provide robust protection from hospitalization and death from reinfection. However, those who have recovered from COVID, can still get reinfected and have the potential to spread the virus more than those who have been vaccinated. People who get infected after vaccination have no symptoms or mild to moderate symptoms and don't generally require hospitalization.

A new pill for early treatment of mild to moderate COVID is now in the works. We will have to wait and see how safe and effective it will be. Antivirals are very difficult to bring to market, so it is astonishing to have a potentially viable candidate so soon. I hope more such drugs will be developed and we will soon have not only effective vaccines but effective treatments as well.

Best of health and Happy Thanksgiving to all!