



Update 52 - COVID-19 – From Office of the Medical Director 15DEC2020 1600

To: All EMS Personnel in the EMS System for Metropolitan Oklahoma City & Tulsa

December 14, 2020: Number of COVID-19 Vaccines Received by Dr. G = 0

December 15, 2020: Number of COVID-19 Vaccines Received by Dr. G = 1

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*Photo Credit: Mike Simons – Tulsa World*

That's me – very, very grateful to receive COVID-19 vaccination today. As you know, I will never bs you (can I say bs in these Updates? Hmm, I'll have to check on that) about anything, let alone about something as important as your health. So, no bs... I feel great! I didn't even feel the shot – not a single twinge of pain. Hmm, let me double check sensation in my left arm as part of a self-stroke assessment scale.... yeah, I'm good, no stroke either.

No injection site pain, no injection site swelling, no muscle aches, no nausea. But I'll be very open if I do have any post-vaccination symptoms so you can know you have at least one source you can trust about that stuff.

Now, I'm going to ask you to follow my lead and get vaccinated as well. I care about your health and how it impacts your family's health, the health of patients you are treating, and how it even impacts our community's health. A healthy you is a wonderful thing.

I've studied the science of how the vaccines work and the studies that validated their effectiveness and safety -- see Update 51 for a great video that summarized a bunch of information about these vaccines. I truly believe they are safe and put my left arm up for vaccination in full evidence of that. I can hardly wait to get the second vaccination in three weeks, either.

I learned I could get vaccinated less than 24 hours before the picture above. You may have the same experience in timing as vaccines continue to arrive in Oklahoma, things are moving very quickly. So please be prepared to adjust your schedule on the fly is the point. If you feel better asking me a question about the vaccine before you get the shot, reach out and I'll give you the most accurate answer I know.

Please work with each other as some of the dates and times available for your vaccination could be when you are on duty. If your organization will allow you to be temporarily out of service to get the vaccination, super. Or if circumstances make it difficult for someone to get vaccinated on duty, please consider helping to cover that short time to allow a colleague to clock out and take care of their health. We're all in this together, right?

By the way, some special friends of mine happen to think you are TOP PRIORITY, too. Here's what the American College of Emergency Physicians thinks about you in a statement released Friday night:

"The American College of Emergency Physicians supports EMS professionals and their role on the front lines of the COVID-19 response. We believe EMS professionals should be afforded Group 1A access to the COVID vaccine as recommended by the CDC and FDA so they can safely continue the fight against this pandemic.

ACEP encourages state policymakers to make every effort to ensure that all EMS professionals on the frontline have the opportunity to be vaccinated as soon as possible. The management of emergency patients takes a team and we must ALL be safely there for our patients." (source: <https://www.acep.org/corona/COVID-19-alert/covid-19-articles/acep-statement-on-ems-professionals-priority-access-to-the-covid-19-vaccine/>)

And the National Association of EMS Physicians had this to say earlier today:

"NAEMSP strongly encourages state and local governments creating COVID-19 vaccination plans to follow the Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines which recommend that eligible EMS individuals be included in the highest priority group for COVID-19 vaccination. EMS professionals have been working tirelessly on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, risking their lives to be the first line of defense for infected patients across the country—many of whom may not show symptoms or know they are infected. NAEMSP knows state governments across the country appreciate the importance of this work. Following this recommendation can help protect not only the EMS professionals, but also patients across the country who rely on them to provide critical out-of-hospital care. NAEMSP strongly encourages all eligible individuals, and particularly our partners in the public safety and emergency medical arena, to obtain all recommended doses of available vaccines at the earliest opportunity afforded to them in order to protect themselves, their patients, their families, and the nation. NAEMSP also recommends vigilance and maintaining proper safety precautions after vaccination." (source: <https://naemsp.org/home/news/naemsp-statement-on-prioritizing-ems-professionals/>)

A lot of folks, including physicians that support you and countless citizens we serve, think you are appropriately at the front of the vaccination line. It can be hard to see ourselves getting the care we prefer to see others get first, but this is a time in which caring about the safety of others involves us getting care (vaccination) as soon as we can.

Thanks for everything you continue to do in this viral pandemic. We see it and we truly respect you for it.

*Vigilance. Safety. Evidence-Based Service to Others.*

*Let's be careful out there.*

Dr. Goodloe