We are experiencing a high number of COVID-19 cases in the region. You should wear a mask in indoor public places, even if you are fully vaccinated. Please wear a mask in outdoor settings if it is crowded or you expect close contact with others.

Wearing a mask will protect you. It will protect people around you. And the more people who do it, the more we protect the community. This is similar to littering. If one person litters, no one notices the impact. If many people litter, it creates a problem for everyone.

The risks of the vaccine are far lower than the risks of COVID-19. Please get a vaccine. Even if you are healthy, it is best not to get the COVID-19 infection, because you can spread it to vulnerable people without knowing.

92% of recent COVID-19 deaths in Erie County are in people who are not fully vaccinated.

There is evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines are SAFE during pregnancy. Infection with the COVID-19 virus during pregnancy can cause poor outcomes for moms and newborns. One study showed if a mother gives birth while infected with COVID-19, they have a 5 times elevated risk of dying.

There is NO evidence that the COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility. However, the COVID-19 infection CAN affect future fertility.

You are not protected by your racial, ethnic or age group.

COVID-19 is not like influenza. It is 10 times more fatal.

Why get a COVID-19 vaccine if we still have to wear masks and practice social distancing? We must use every tool available to control the pandemic. Each tool contributes toward “flattening the curve” and reducing, for example, the number of critically ill patients.

Why should I get the vaccine when people who are vaccinated can still get COVID-19? The COVID-19 vaccines were designed to prevent serious infection, hospitalization, and death. All of the current US vaccines provide very strong protection against all of these outcomes, with protection against hospitalization and death greater than 90%. Most vaccinated people who do get COVID have either no symptoms or very mild symptoms and are much less likely to be hospitalized or die.

How do we know the vaccines are safe in the long term? In the history of vaccine research, most vaccine side effects appear within a few weeks and almost all appear within six months. We now have data for well beyond six months for people who have received the COVID-19 vaccines, and it continues to show they are extremely safe. More than 360 million doses have been given in the US. At no point were shortcuts taken or safety compromised.
The ILI/COVID Working Group of Western New York was formed in response to local variation in approach to the diagnosis and treatment of Influenza-Like-Illness and COVID-19 in the region. It is a collaborative effort of hospital systems, academic departments, independent practice associations, and insurers. The logos and signatures on this document represent the organizations’ support of this statement.

Legal Notice and Disclaimer: Please note that the information contained in these resources does not establish a standard of care, nor does it constitute legal or medical advice. These guidelines reflect the best available data at the time the information was prepared. The results of future studies may require revisions to the information in this guideline to reflect new data. This information is not intended to replace individual provider clinical judgment in the care of their patients. Neither this workgroup, or any contributor to this effort, makes any representations or warranties, express or implied, with respect to the information provided herein or to its use.

Buffalo Healthy Living is a media sponsor of the WNY COVID-19 Working Group.