

Clinician Update

Jan. 7, 2021

Bamlanivimab (Monoclonal Antibody) Treatment for Mild-to-Moderate COVID-19

Since early December, Virtua has provided more than 100 high-risk patients treatment with bamlanivimab, a monoclonal antibody for non-hospitalized patients with mild-to moderate COVID-19 symptoms. In the health system's experience with those first 100 patients, only one has needed hospitalization.

Virtua is among select centers that are offering the treatment, which received emergency use authorization from the FDA and is given by a one-time IV infusion over the course of several hours. In addition to its therapeutic benefits, the therapy may help preserve hospital capacity.

Patients include individuals at high risk for hospitalization or progression to severe illness, plus one or more of the following risk factors: BMI of 35 or higher, chronic kidney disease, diabetes, immunosuppressive disease or receiving immunosuppressive treatment, age 65 or older, or age 55 or older with certain chronic conditions.

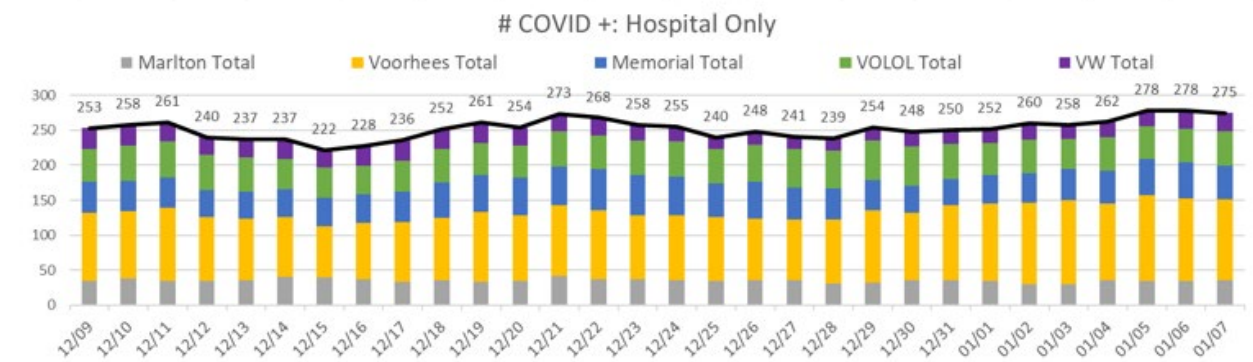
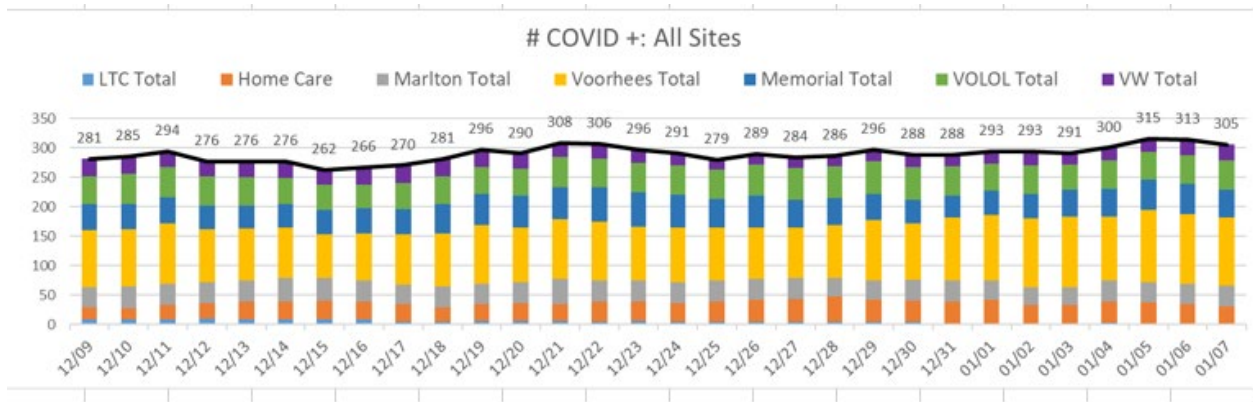
Virtua's offering of the treatment has received wide media attention this week, including stories in the following outlets:

- [News 12 NJ](#)
- [NJ Business](#)
- [South Jersey Local News](#)
- [Patch](#)
- [Burlington County Chamber of Commerce](#)

If you have patients who meet the criteria, a referral line has been established through the COVID-19 Triage line: **856-325-3150**. We encourage you to discuss this treatment option among your at-risk patients.

By the Numbers

The following charts reflect the latest figures for Virtua-site cases of COVID-19.



Fast Facts

- The rate of transmission in New Jersey is currently at .99.
- Locally, in the tri-county area, there have been a total of 1,793 confirmed deaths, as of 1 p.m. today. The state also reports “probable” deaths from COVID-19, with figures shared separately on the [state dashboard](#). For the three counties, probable deaths would account for an additional 137 fatalities.
- The total number of cases are as follows:
 - Burlington County 23,063
 - Camden County 30,639
 - Gloucester County 15,395



Important Information Regarding Vaccination Appointments

Beginning tomorrow, **Friday, Jan. 8**, Virtua’s COVID-19 vaccine clinic in Voorhees will begin to provide some Virtua colleagues with their second dose of the vaccine. This exciting next chapter in our process means that our clinic will concurrently provide some people with their *first* vaccine dose and others with their *second*.

To ensure a smooth process for all parties, please note the following:

- When you arrive at your vaccine appointment, please check in at the registration desk (even if you have already completed the eCheck-In process using the MyChart app). The registrar will consult your patient record and ask you to confirm whether you are receiving your first or second dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- The registrar will then hand you a color-coded card. Please show this card to the volunteer stationed at the door leading to the vaccination stations. This person will direct you to the appropriate vaccinator.
- Present your card to the vaccinator. You will see that your card corresponds with a pin worn by the vaccinator and the signage at the vaccination station.
- Based on your patient record in Epic, your card, and your verbal response, the vaccinator will ask you to confirm whether you are receiving your first or second dose.

This multi-step verification process is an example of Virtua’s safety principles in action.



Important: When you attend your second vaccine appointment, you must bring the **COVID-19 Vaccination Record Card** you received at your first vaccine appointment (seen here). Do not forget

or lose this important document. (Spare copies will be available onsite if necessary, but this should be the exception, not the rule.)

Whether it is your first or second appointment, remember that you are required to remain under observation for at least 15 minutes after receiving a COVID-19 vaccination. Please plan your day accordingly.

More COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Does Virtua decide which version of the vaccine it provides to colleagues?

No. The State of New Jersey oversees the complicated process of vaccine distribution throughout the state. Virtua does not select what version of the vaccine it receives (i.e., Pfizer, Moderna). Therefore, Virtua colleagues also do not get to select a preferred version of the vaccine.

If you receive the Pfizer vaccine initially, you will receive the Pfizer vaccine again exactly 21 days later. If you receive the Moderna vaccine initially, you will receive the Moderna vaccine again exactly 28 days later.

It is imperative that you attend your second-dose appointment at the designated date and time. Given the complexity of our clinic operations, we cannot alter the date of second-dose appointments; please make this your priority.

All appointment dates can be found on MyChart.

Can I get vaccinated even if I said no on a previous survey?

Yes. Virtua conducted the COVID-19 vaccine survey as a way to gauge the interest of all colleagues. Your past response **does not** prevent you from requesting/receiving a vaccine appointment.

When can my family get vaccinated?

Many colleagues are understandably eager to have their spouse and/or other family members vaccinated in the near future. At this moment, COVID-19 vaccines are only available to people who fall within the New Jersey Department of Health's "Category 1A," which includes "persons serving in health care settings" and "long term care residents and staff."

In time, vaccines will be available to other groups (such as essential workers and senior citizens), and eventually, the general public. New Jersey's goal is to vaccinate 70 percent of its adult population within six months. We will keep you informed as the vaccine becomes more widely available to the general public.

You can also read more about the Department of Health's distribution plan [here](#).

If I had COVID-19 a few months ago or more, should I be vaccinated?

The CDC says yes. The CDC website reads: "At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long."

If I had COVID-19 in the past few weeks, should I get vaccinated?

While there is no recommended minimum interval between infection and vaccination, current evidence suggests that reinfection is uncommon in the 90 days after initial infection. Our recommendation is that you speak with your primary care provider to create a personalized vaccination plan.

Should I be vaccinated if I had a known exposure to COVID-19?

No. If you are aware of a high-risk exposure to COVID-19, you should not come to the vaccine center and put others potentially at risk. Also, any future symptoms may become confused with a vaccine reaction. You are asked to delay vaccination for 14 days from the time of exposure. If you end up COVID-positive, delay vaccination as outlined above.

To read the complete list of Frequently Asked Questions and Answers regarding the COVID-19 vaccine, visit the [Coronavirus Resource Center](#) on the VINE.

Dr. Anthony Fauci and Health Partners Address Common Questions about COVID-19 Vaccine



In partnership with **Dr. Anthony Fauci** and leading health organizations, the Ad Council and COVID Collaborative developed a [video series](#) to help health care providers better understand and answer common questions about COVID-19 vaccination.

The videos feature physicians and nurses addressing the efficacy and safety of the new vaccines to help inspire better understanding and confidence. Topics addressed include safety, availability, cost, side effects, vaccine administration, and answering patients' questions.

Click [here](#) to view one of the videos in the series.

Cyber Activity Related to the COVID-19 Vaccine

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, phishing emails related to the virus have been sent to individuals, encouraging them to open malicious links and attachments, or to divulge personal and financial information. Now, these same tactics have surfaced in regards to the COVID-19 vaccine.

Subject lines make reference to vaccine registration, information about vaccine coverage, locations to receive the vaccine, ways to reserve a vaccine, and vaccine requirements.



One email campaign targeting New Jersey state employees impersonated the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and requested the recipient to click on a link to order COVID-19 vaccines. That link directed the user to a webpage that collects personal information, including name, address, date of birth, driver's license number, phone number, and email address.



We encourage Virtua colleagues to refrain from taking action on emails from unknown or unverified senders, including opening links or attachments or divulging personal or financial information. If you believe that an email is suspicious, we encourage you to report the email as phishing by clicking on the "Report Phishing" button on the top right-hand corner of the email.

Help Your Community by Giving Blood

We invite you to join Virtua colleagues by helping the American Red Cross maintain a sufficient blood supply.

The Red Cross will host several blood drives at various Virtua locations in the days ahead, including:

Friday, Jan. 8

Virtua William G. Rohrer Fitness Center, 2 to 7 p.m.

Tuesday, Jan. 12

Virtua Health & Wellness Center – Moorestown, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 22

Virtua Voorhees Hospital, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 3

Virtua Health & Wellness Center – Washington Township, 2 to 7 p.m.

The Red Cross continues to take additional measures to ensure the safety of its donors and recipients. These include donor temperature screenings, additional screening questions, enhanced disinfecting, and social distancing.

It is quick and easy to sign up for our blood drives. Appointments are preferred. Click [here](#) to sign up and use sponsor code Virtua.

VOTE: 2021 Top Docs for Kids

Virtua has so many clinicians who are exemplars in pediatric medicine. Here is an opportunity to give them some recognition. Balloting for Top Docs for Kids is happening right now through *SJ Magazine*. Every year, the magazine asks South Jersey doctors to nominate colleagues for *SJ Magazine's* Top Docs for Kids issue. There is a ballot at <https://sjmagazine.net/special-stories/vote-2021-top-docs-for-kids-ballot> using this basic question as a guide: "If your child was ill, who would you send them to?"

Vote for your Top Doc(s) for Kids by entering the name(s) in the form and clicking send at the bottom. A physician license number is required.

Voting ends Feb. 1, and the results will be published in the magazine's March 2021 issue.

Separately, looking ahead to the spring, the 2021 Top Docs distinction soon will be on the ballot. That voting is scheduled to begin in April and will honor physicians chosen by their peers – and patients – and will be published in September.

Tune in to a Special Virtual Performance from Musicians on Call

Musicians on Call, who deliver the healing power of music to patients, will be hosting another virtual performance next **Wednesday, Jan. 13** at 3 p.m. for patients and colleagues at its member hospitals in the Philadelphia region, which includes all Virtua hospitals.

We invite you to share [this link](#) with patients and fellow colleagues to watch the 30-minute show that will be broadcast live on YouTube.

Thank you, Congressman Andy Kim

Thank you to Third District **U.S. Rep. Andy Kim** for visiting Virtua's COVID-19 vaccine clinic over the weekend. The congressman said, "Being able to come to a facility like this gives me a lot of hope. And this is the exact kind of facility that's going to get our community back on our feet." Congressman Kim posted [this video](#) to Facebook congratulating Virtua on its efforts.