

be informed

a newsletter of Phoebe Putney Health System

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Delta Variant of COVID-19 Significantly Increases in Southeast

After a brief respite, the war on COVID appears to be heating up once again. Looking at the daily COVID case reporting data from the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPS), there has been a significant increase in cases in Georgia, starting in early July. We are seeing a significant increase in cases locally as well. According to CDC data, **the delta variant of COVID was responsible for 85% of cases in the Southeastern US** for the 2 week period ending July 1. While it is not known whether the delta variant is circulating locally, we have noticed some differences in patterns recently. There seems to be a higher number of cases in younger individuals, and we are seeing some breakthrough infections in people who are fully vaccinated.

A recent study by the CDC, showed the **delta variant to be much more contagious compared to other strains of COVID**, similar to that seen in highly contagious diseases such as Chickenpox. Another concerning feature was the ability of the delta variant to infect fully immunized individuals, resulting in viral loads that were the same as in non-vaccinated individuals. Fully immunized individuals who became infected also appeared able to spread the disease. The good news is that illness in fully vaccinated individuals appears to be less severe, and much less likely to result in hospitalization or death. However, the

fact that fully vaccinated people can be infected with the delta variant, and it's increased contagiousness, is what led the CDC to update its recommendations regarding wearing masks for those fully vaccinated. To minimize the risk of contracting COVID, it is still very important to practice prevention strategies including **wearing masks, socially distancing, and frequent hand hygiene. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth without performing hand hygiene first.** Being vaccinated does appear to provide good protection from serious illness, hospitalization, and death, so is still highly recommended.

Other prevention strategies include screening employees/customers before entry to your facility. This could include monitoring temperatures and symptom questionnaires before entry, requiring wearing masks, providing hand sanitizing stations, and physical barriers. Prompt testing, and quarantining until results are back, of symptomatic employees can help reduce transmission. New therapies continue to emerge, including the use of **monoclonal antibody infusion (mABs)**, which is now available through Phoebe.

Should your organization need assistance with COVID testing, vaccination, or further information on

COVID or mABS, please do not hesitate to contact us at 229-312-9220. We look forward to working with you.



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Phoebe Corporate Health is Now Offering On-Site Flu Vaccines

Ensuring that people continue or start getting routine vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic is essential for protecting people and the workforce from vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks, including flu.

For the upcoming flu season, flu vaccination will be very important to reduce flu because it can help reduce the overall impact of respiratory illnesses.

Benefits of Flu Vaccination

- **Keep you healthy** – flu vaccine has been shown to reduce the risk of getting sick by 40%-60%.
- **Reduce flu-associated hospitalizations** – flu vaccines have reduced the risk of hospitalizations among adult on average by 40%.
- **Preventive for individuals with chronic health conditions** – flu vaccines lower rates of contraction for individuals with heart disease, especially those who had a cardiac event in the past year.
- **Protect women during and after pregnancy** – flu vaccination reduces the flu-associated acute respiratory infection in pregnant women by half.
- **Reduce severity of illness** – 2017 study showed that the flu vaccination reduced ICU admissions and length of stay compared to patients that did not have the vaccine

COVID-19 and Flu Highlights:

- Annual flu vaccination is recommended for everyone six months or age and older, with rare exceptions
- Flu vaccination should be postponed for individuals suspected or confirmed COVID-19

- Flu vaccination is **not** a vaccination for COVID-19. Both viruses are contagious respiratory illnesses and have several of the same symptoms.
- It is possible to have the flu and COVID-19 at the same time. With similar symptoms, it will be more important than ever to consult your medical provider if you are experiencing any illness symptoms.

For more information, please visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Phoebe Corporate Health will take care of all your needs to ensure your employees are vaccinated for the flu. By providing our On-Site Delivery of services, employees will have access to conveniently located vaccinations. Also included are all administrative services and a comprehensive report of testing to the employer. Vaccination costs will be filed towards employee's insurance or services will be payroll deducted by your employer.



Mobile wellness clinics bring expanded onsite services to your workplace



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This spring, Phoebe unveiled two new mobile wellness clinics – custom-built units that are full-service clinics, with two exam rooms, a waiting area, bathroom, lab equipment and telehealth capabilities.

The units are presently being used to address COVID-related issues. Future uses include addressing the challenges presented in medically-underserved rural communities related to diabetes, hypertension, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cancer, low birth weight babies, and obesity, as well as, expanding our ability to bring business and industry on-site offerings.

These mobile clinics can bring the convenience of expert services and experienced staff directly to your workplace from physical examinations and health screenings to vaccinations and drug and alcohol testing,

To request a Phoebe Mobile Wellness Clinic onsite visit to your workplace, go to phoebehealth.com/services/corporate-health.