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Subject: What to be thankful for during COVID19
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To: [REDACTED]



Hello Middleton Pediatrics Family,

As a way of updating everyone, I want to share some things for which I am especially thankful during this difficult time as well as some perspectives on what might be ahead.

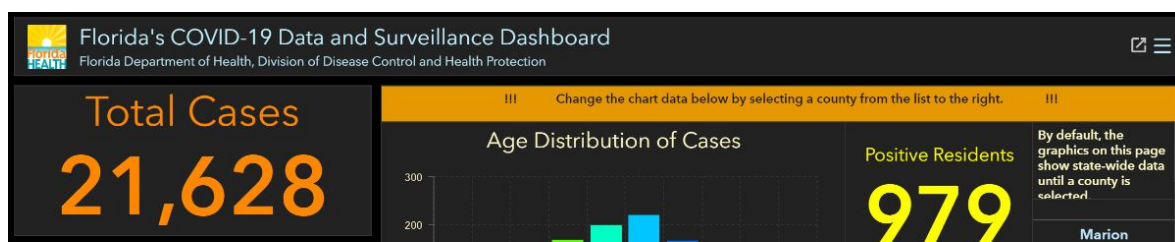
“Give thanks in all circumstances.”

St. Paul, in a letter to a church in Thessalonica, Greece

I am really thankful for the Central Florida medical community. Our local hospital systems and state/county health departments have been extremely helpful throughout the coronavirus pandemic. It has been impressive to see the extensive preparation done by the hospital systems in trying to make sure they have the necessary resources to care for our community in the event of a COVID-19 “surge” like has been seen in other metropolitan areas. Hopefully we will not need all the resources prepared and gathered, which leads me to...

I am really thankful for the Lead time. We in Central Florida have had so much more (in terms of weeks) warning than many other communities (such as Wuhan, China; Lombardy, Italy; Seattle, Washington; New York City), and this has allowed us to take measures to try to “flatten the curve”, which leads me to...

I am really thankful that our curve is flattening. Here is an image that links to the Florida Department of Health's dashboard. This interactive tool is great and currently shows a trend in the right direction.





Here in Central Florida and in many places across our country, there is really good evidence that the social distancing measures instituted have made a difference. Great job!

Now, in terms of what might be ahead -

“It’s difficult to make predictions, especially about the future.”
Yogi Berra

It is really important that we as a Central Florida community keep it up because **we have not hit our peak**. It is estimated that we are still potentially 3 weeks from our peak. And it is important to remember that even on the other side of the peak there is still a potential for a lot of illness. Which leads me to...

"When will this end?" is one of the questions on most people’s minds, and while it is impossible to answer now, we are likely going to be at this for a while. It is unlikely that this virus will wane due to warmer weather; to be clear, it may wane during the summer months due to multitude of factors (e.g. social distancing, not in school, larger percentages of population already having had it) but likely not because of weather. It is likely that this battle with COVID-19 will continue for quite some time and therefore many of the measures that have been used to control the spread will also need to continue. Masks. 6 feet of separation, limiting larger gatherings. There will obviously be a high priority on getting kids back to school and workers back to work, though these decisions will involve the complicated interplay of county, state, and federal leaders and will likely be based on a number of factors such as the amount of disease activity in a particular area and the ability to identify and isolate cases

with testing. Which leads us to...

Testing. There are two types of testing being discussed. The first is the “Viral Swab” test (also referred to as the “PCR” test; obtained typically with a nasal swab). This is the one being done currently to diagnose the illness as it detects the presence of the virus itself, and over 200,000 have been done in the state of Florida. This test is like catching the criminal in the act, finding them at the scene of the crime. The other type of test being discussed is antibody tests (also referred to as “serology”; this is a blood test). This test is more like fingerprints, i.e. evidence that the virus has been there. Both types of tests are going to be important in the months to come and will need to be used on a widespread basis, albeit for different reasons. One of the hopes for getting more clarification in the coming months are the antibody tests which can tell us who has already had and recovered from the infection, including asymptomatic infections. However, there are questions to be answered with this test such as accuracy of results; if antibodies are present does it indicate that someone can be confident they are protected and unable to get the illness; if protected, how long does this protection last; etc. And there is concern that this dance of widespread testing, gradual and perhaps intermittent relaxation of social distancing measures could continue until we have a vaccine. Which leads us to...

Vaccine. This is probably the ultimate answer and hope for the question of when might this be over. Being able to have an effective vaccine is not a given as some viruses have proven really difficult to make a vaccine against; however, the coordinated effort, remarkable resources, and brainpower being directed towards the vaccine are reasons to be confident. As to the question of “when will the vaccine be ready”, anything prior to 2021 would be remarkable and unprecedented. Which leads me to...

A few more things for which I am thankful...

I am really thankful for the vaccines that we currently have against diseases far more contagious such as measles, diseases far more deadly such as bacterial meningitis, and even our influenza vaccine with all its relative limitations in effectiveness. How we would love to have a vaccine available

today for COVID-19 with a profile similar to our yearly influenza vaccine!

I am really thankful for the scientific and medical community working brilliantly and tirelessly to understand this virus. We have seen incredible collaboration to know how it is transmitted, how it causes illness, sharing of treatment practices and outcomes, and treating patients in some of the most difficult situations.

I am really thankful for our team at Middleton Pediatrics. Everyone has been so adaptable in the ever-changing situation and so willing to do whatever is needed to continue to care for the families of our practice, which leads me to...

I am so thankful for families like you that trust us with helping care for your children. Thank you for the privilege.

We really do have a lot to be thankful for.

Hanging in there with you and your family.

Dr. Middleton

Middleton Pediatrics



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