<u>COVID-19 Update from Johnson County Ob/Gyn. December, 2021.</u>

The recent surge in Covid-19 cases is fueled by the Omicron variant which has been found to be far more contagious and more easily transmissible than other strains or the virus Hospitals are admitting Covid patients at an alarming rate, **nearly all are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated.** The consequences of this surge in infected individuals could affect your pregnancy and how hospitals admit and manage patients including labor and delivery. The following information is meant to inform our patients of the benefits of vaccination and other protective measures that should be taken during pregnancy.

Collectively, as Board Certified Obstetricians, and following the recommendations of the American College of Ob/Gyn, the Society for Maternal Fetal Medicine, and the CDC (Centers for Disease Control), we all strongly encourage getting the Covid-19 vaccine during pregnancy. The vaccine protects both you and your baby during your pregnancy. **Also, it is imperative that you follow scientific information and your doctor's advice and not rely on unsubstantiated and non-scientific internet claims regarding the virus and the vaccine! Talk to your healthcare provider if you have questions about the Covid-19 virus or vaccine. Be informed!**

<u>Facts based on medical evidence:</u>
- The benefits of the Covid vaccine far outweigh any potential side effects
- The virus is far more likely to cause complications with your pregnancy than the vaccine
- Getting Covid during pregnancy can lead to adverse pregnancy outcomes.
- Your immune system is suppressed during pregnancy which could make you more susceptible to the virus and more likely to have a worse infection leading to hospitalization, intubation and other complications including death.

<u>Vaccines:</u>
- Nearly all of the currently hospitalized patients with Covid-19 are unvaccinated, and the number is increasing every single day. Local hospitals are on the brink of being overwhelmed.
- Your risk of contracting Covid-19 is far less if you are vaccinated, Omicron variant included.
- Unvaccinated people make it dangerous for everyone – children, people with weak immune systems, seniors, even vaccinated people.
- If you're unvaccinated, you could help the virus spread. That means you are giving the virus the opportunity to morph into new variants that can be even more contagious or deadly. **The virus, by its nature, is fighting to survive and spread, and you are helping it do so.**
- There have been exceedingly few vaccine related complications with any of the three currently available vaccines.
- There have been no significant pregnancy related complications with **over 3 billion vaccine doses** given worldwide.

<u>Face masks:</u>
- Masks protect you and those around you. Covid-19 is a respiratory virus and spreads through the air when you breathe, cough, talk, shout or sing.
- Unvaccinated people should mask up when around others. Wear a mask when indoors in public places where transmission rate is very high.
- Mask up if someone in your home is unvaccinated or if anyone is showing respiratory or sinus symptoms consistent with Covid-19 (congestion, cough, headache, fever, etc.).