



Norbert Goldfield, MD  
Founder, CEO

**Ask Nurses & Doctors LLC**

72 Laurel Park  
Northampton MA 01060  
413-800-2680  
norbert@asknursesdoctors.com  
www.asknursesdoctors.com  
@asknursesdoctors.com

## October 29 COVID Notes. Future Pandemic Preparedness, Covid Endemic?

Is COVID becoming like the flu? Not by a long shot. COVID is much more serious and there are many states where COVID is still hot. Yet in some states, people think of COVID as [endemic](#)—present, not overwhelming. Two points: we've felt like this before Delta variant and despite everyone's prognostications, we simply don't know. For now, I have few COVID positive patients.

The U.S. has 1/7 of the world's COVID deaths, a much higher percentage of COVID deaths as compared to the rest of the world. [A new Axios/Ipsos poll](#) finds Americans are uncertain about how well the COVID-19 vaccines work, despite reams of data about their ability to protect people from severe disease, hospitalization and death. Which part of the U.S. has the highest vaccination rate... [Puerto Rico](#); West Virginia the [lowest](#). Importantly, vaccinated individuals have [lower mortality](#) from non-covid illness as compared to the unvaccinated. Unfortunately, the medical profession has largely stood by as physicians continue to [spread misinformation](#). Why do people wear masks – a [truly great article](#).

Crime has been a hot button issue. As recently [well summarized](#): The crime prevention debate has remained largely stagnant. For decades, it has focused on two options: mitigating crime's root causes or fighting it head-on through policing. The former poses a longer-term challenge often without immediate noticeable results, making it easier for most city leaders to invest in policing instead. Minneapolis itself is at the forefront of cities grappling with that dilemma. [Amid a steep increase in homicides](#) there, its residents will vote next week on a ballot measure that would [fundamentally overhaul the city's police department](#) and replace it with a Department of Public Safety.

Last week I [gave "medical grand rounds"](#) at Baystate Medical Center where I practice. Entitled Peace through Health, I emphasized that the U.S. is a fragile state, a term typically reserved for countries emerging from war. The U.S. has performed worse than any industrialized country in its pandemic response to COVID. It is clear that we have learned little from this experience. We are less prepared now to address this or future pandemic than before the start of this one. Among other challenges, we have no appetite to control health care costs especially [pharmaceuticals](#) so that all can get health insurance, to have [universal access to the COVID vaccine](#) to effectively address the current pandemic, and to [strengthen public health infrastructure](#) to effectively deal with this/future pandemics. AND will continue to address these and other health care issues and we welcome your engagement and suggestions.

Norbert Goldfield, M.D.