

Doctors upbeat about congresswoman; politicians denounce shooting

By Michael Muskal, Los Angeles Times

Critically wounded U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords is able to respond to simple commands, doctors said Sunday. Meanwhile, the nation tried to come to grips with the Arizona shooting rampage, which killed six and spurred a troubled country to reexamine its political culture.

At a televised news conference in Tucson, Dr. Michael Lemole, a surgeon at the University Medical Center, said Giffords had responded to doctors' commands. In great detail, he described how the gunshot went through the left side of the congresswoman's head and how doctors worked to remove bone fragments to help reduce the swelling and possible damage to the brain.

Though the news was a positive, Giffords remained in critical condition, doctors said.

Even as doctors continued to be upbeat about Giffords, the toll from deadly shootings continued to climb. In addition to the six dead, at least 14, including Giffords, were injured when a gunman opened fire in the Tucson supermarket where Giffords was meeting constituents. One suspect is in custody, and police announced earlier Sunday they were seeking a "person of interest" for questioning.

Among the dead was a 9-year-old girl, the granddaughter of noted former baseball manager Dallas Green and the daughter of Dodgers baseball scout John Green. In emotional appearances on several networks, Roxanna Green described her daughter, Christina Taylor Green, as an angel, born Sept. 11, 2001, the

day of the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil.

Noting that her daughter's life began and ended in tragedy, Green called for an end to violence.

"I just want her memory to live on that she's a face of hope, face of change, face of ... us coming together as a country to stop the violence and hatred and the evil wars," Green said on MSNBC. "We have to protect our government officials and our innocent young children."

Even as politicians on both sides of the aisle called the shootings horrific and unacceptable, investigators were stepping up their search for what they described as a person of interest who was wanted in connection with Saturday's shooting. The unknown person was photographed by a surveillance camera near the shooting suspect, Jared Lee Loughner, 22.

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