

Dear Patients:

As the pandemic of COVID-19 affects our communities, families, co-workers, and health care providers, Rutgers Health is continuing to work with public health officials to ensure the safety of all who come to our clinical practice sites. COVID-19 is widespread in our communities and the risk of becoming exposed to the virus can occur anytime we leave our homes, even for food, medicine, or healthcare. The symptoms of COVID-19 for most people are mild and can be cared for at home. Some people will develop more severe symptoms of difficulty breathing and pneumonia that will require going to the hospital.

Your care team is working daily to keep as many patients from leaving their homes for healthcare as possible as a safety measure. Unless absolutely necessary, your appointment is being rescheduled for a later date. If you must come for an in-person appointment with your healthcare provider, you may notice that there is a required screening process for all entering our clinical buildings. Your healthcare team will be wearing masks during your visit to the clinic. These measures are to keep everyone as safe as possible while in the clinic spaces at Rutgers Health.

We are delaying and rescheduling many in-person visits whenever possible. We are offering alternative ways to continue to care for you and your health during this time. Many of our physicians are now available through appointment to provide virtual visits by video telehealth or telephone.

There are several things that everyone can do to decrease the chance of becoming sick with COVID-19:

- 1) Follow all public health recommendations for social distancing by staying home as much as possible, and avoiding public transportation, crowded public places, large gatherings, and even family celebrations.
- 2) Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- 3) Avoid touching your face to minimize contact with your hands.
- 4) Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in your home daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
- 5) Avoid close contact with anyone who is sick. Close contact includes being within six feet of the person or touching surfaces that the person may have touched.
- 6) Monitor yourself for any new symptoms: fever, cough, sore throat, or difficulty breathing.
- 7) If you do become sick, contact your primary care provider right away. Your provider will advise you on your plan of care and if testing for COVID-19 is recommended.
- 8) **If you feel you are experiencing a medical emergency, and need to call an ambulance, dial 9-1-1.**

# RUTGERS HEALTH

We realize that this is a stressful time and are committed to helping you with any questions or healthcare needs. Please call your clinic office or Rutgers healthcare provider with any specific questions about your health.

**For More Information on COVID19 and Resources for Patients:**

New Jersey has a 24-hour public hotline: Call (24/7): 1-800-962-1253

New Jersey Department of Health

<https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml>

Resources for Patients and the Community

[http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/news\\_publications/news-releases/covid-19-\(coronavirus\)-information](http://rwjms.rutgers.edu/news_publications/news-releases/covid-19-(coronavirus)-information)

If you have close contact or live with someone who has confirmed COVID19

[https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID\\_FAQs\\_For\\_Close\\_Contacts\\_People\\_Test.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID_FAQs_For_Close_Contacts_People_Test.pdf)

Rutgers University Resources

<https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/>