

STAYING SAFE IN A TIME OF DISTRESS:

REMINDERS FROM HENNEPIN HEALTHCARE

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We at Hennepin Healthcare recognize that our patients, families and community members are under stress because of the COVID-19 virus. Please know that we want to help you stay well and/or recover from any illness. In fact, helping you is an important part of our organizational mission.

You and your family are very important to us! Please understand that the COVID-19 virus is placing great strain on our entire healthcare system. This means that, for your safety and the safety of others, unless you are showing signs and symptoms of the COVID-19 virus, you should do the following:

- Stay home and limit your contact with others
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 30 seconds
- Use hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your face
- Cover your cough with your elbow
- Wear a mask if you are sick

The signs and symptoms of this virus include shortness of breath; headaches; body aches; dry cough. Chances are good that you do not have COVID-19, or that you have a mild case that will get better as you develop antibodies to the virus. Unless your symptoms become extreme, it is important to avoid unnecessary contact with others and follow the guidance to **STAY HOME**.

Here are some questions and answers from your friends at Hennepin Healthcare:

Q. What is COVID-19?

It's a novel virus that gives you a fever, makes you cough and impacts your breathing. "Novel" means that this particular virus has never been seen before in human populations.

Q. Is there medicine to treat COVID-19?

There is not specific medication to treat COVID-19. But some over-the-counter medications may help relieve fever and/or cough.

Q. I have diabetes. Should I still come to the clinic for my regular appointment?

It is very important you keep managing your health. Contact your doctor, who will help you decide the best way to get treatment or advice. Hennepin Healthcare doctors are still seeing patients in person. They are also working with patients through phone calls or through video visits.

If you do not have a regular physician, please call our help line at 612-873-6963 for further information.

questions and answers from your friends at Hennepin Healthcare continued...

Q. Is the COVID-19 virus a “Chinese” virus?

No. First, we may not know for certain where the virus originated until the pandemic is over. However, there is no excuse for designating a “nationality” for the virus. Hennepin Healthcare is opposed to this kind of labeling, which can result in blaming and shaming individuals and racial groups. Please don’t do this – we need each other!

Q. What about the practice of “social distancing”? Does Hennepin Healthcare endorse this?

We endorse the concept of “physical distancing” as a way of keeping people safe. This means acting as if you already have the virus, which can serve as a protection for you and others. However, we need to maintain SAFE SOCIAL CONTACT with family and friends. Do your best to use the Internet and other digital tools to stay connected to those who care about you.

For too long, communities of color have been isolated and distanced from each other. This has caused a number of inequities in healthcare – inequities that can be harmful to people of color. We want to use every tool we have to remain connected to family and friends.

Q. I feel sick. Should I come to the emergency room?

Our emergency room is prepared to take care of the most critically sick or injured people in our community. The symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, shortness of breath and muscles aches. These symptoms can often be managed at home. If you have any questions about whether or not you should be seen, you can call us at 612-873-6963.

Q. What if I am experiencing the symptoms of COVID-19? What should I do?

Call your physician or reach out to us at the number above. Most of all, please maintain a positive attitude and do not allow yourself to panic.

Q. How long will this pandemic last?

We don’t know. Pharmaceutical firms, research clinics and highly trained medical personnel are working around the clock to defeat the virus. You can help by staying home and staying away from other people if you are sick.

Q. What about getting a COVID-19 test?

Testing supplies are limited across the state and country. We are not able to test everyone at this time. Our testing is limited to individuals at high risk and healthcare workers.

Q. Can I go for a walk?

Going for a walk while maintaining 6 feet of physical distancing from others can be healthy. But, please avoid overcrowded beaches and pathways. Do not speak face-to-face with anyone without maintaining a distance of 6 feet. If you follow these guidelines, you may be able to remain healthy.

Q: What if I need food and don’t have money to purchase it?

There are many sources for food support available through Hennepin County and community food shelves. Please see our resource page on our COVID-19 website at hennepinhealthcare.org/coronavirus

Q. One of my family members/friends is hospitalized at Hennepin Healthcare. Can I come and visit them?

Unfortunately, you may not be able to see family and friends directly. We have made iPads available so that visitors can maintain a safe distance from those who are ill and still be in touch. While this is not an ideal solution, it is driven by a desire to maintain health and safety.