



Dear patients,

As we face COVID-19 in our community, it is imperative that we do everything possible to keep ourselves healthy. I hope this email provides some guidance as we all adapt to this dynamic situation.

Firstly, do not panic. We can limit the spread to reduce the number of sick patients requiring urgent medical care. So it is extremely important that we all practice social distancing. Please stay home where possible. Avoid social gatherings, busy places or travelling. Limit visits to the elderly, immune-compromised or chronically ill. Wash your hands frequently and do not touch your face. Wear a mask if you have symptoms.

Self-isolate if you have mild flu-like symptoms or if you travelled anywhere within the last two weeks. To see if you need COVID-19 testing, use this self-assessment tool: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-self-assessment>. At this time, tests are reserved for high risk cases only. If you are high risk, contact your local Public Health Unit. Please refrain from going to the ER unless you have severe symptoms. Please see the last page of this letter for useful links on determining your risk.

The following measures are effective immediately in my practice:

- **Do not come to the clinic if you have cold symptoms or want to be checked for COVID-19.** We do not have the appropriate infection control equipment and cannot do testing at our clinic. Coming to the clinic will put our most vulnerable patients at risk.

- If you have mild symptoms, **stay home and self-isolate**. Most mild cases will resolve, without treatment, within 7-10 days. Your self-isolation ends after 14 days or when you have no symptoms for 24 hours, **whichever is longer**.
- If you have shortness of breath, chest pain or light-headedness, **call 911 before going to the ER**. This allows preparation of infection control precautions before you arrive.
- All non-essential, non-urgent visits will be done as phone appointments. Book these over the phone. I will call you around the set time. If you want to do a video appointment then sign up for email on our website and mention this at booking. You will be sent a link to use for your video appointment. If using a device other than a computer you will need to download an app. Details will be in the link.
- Routine preventative care like physicals, certain well baby visits and pap smears will be postponed. Please call back in 1-3 months about rebooking, unless you have a newborn, 2 month old or 12 month old please call the office now.
- **Please do not come to the clinic without calling first**. Patients will only be seen in-person on a case-by-case basis.
- If you need to be seen in-person, do not come in early. Please wait in your cars and come into the clinic at the time of the appointment. More specific precautions may be taken on a case-by-case basis.

Finally, thank you for your understanding during these challenging times. It is our job to keep you as safe and healthy as possible. Your cooperation can help us achieve that goal.

Sincerely,

Dr. Qi Wang, Dr. Iram Abbasi, Dr. Alex Ma, Dr. Gillian Hewson and Dr. Maryam Woldeyohannes

Useful Links:

Region of Waterloo 2019 Novel Coronavirus updates:

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/health-and-wellness/2019-novel-coronavirus.aspx#>

Public Health Ontario Self-Isolation Guide:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-guide-isolation-caregivers.pdf?la=en>

2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Self-assessment Tool:

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-self-assessment>

Public Health Ontario Public Health Unit Locator:

<https://www.phdapps.health.gov.on.ca/phulocator/>