



Dear Valued Patients,

In light of the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19), we are taking extra precautions to ensure that our patients remain safe and healthy during visits to our office. We also want to keep our staff and providers healthy so that we can continue to care for our patients.

If you or a household member (spouse, child, live-in relative, etc.) is experiencing a cough, fever, or other cold or flu-like symptoms, if you have been exposed to someone with these symptoms OR if you have traveled to a country or US city with sustained (ongoing) transmission of coronavirus in the past 3 weeks, please do not come to the office. Please call us and we can guide you through recommendations and rescheduling.

Many of our patients have compromised immune symptoms or are elderly. It is for their safety that we are asking patients who may be sick to stay home and not risk exposing those who may be more susceptible to infectious diseases. **We also ask that you refrain from bringing any visitors to your appointment.** We will be happy to video conference with any friend or family member through your personal cell phone during your appointment.

Due to the current medical environment, we are rescheduling all well woman visits and non-urgent gynecology appointments. We will also be recommending to postpone any well woman exams that are due in May or June, to accommodate those women that had their appointments cancelled during the COVID-19 outbreak.

We will be available daily through telehealth (video) appointments. Consults for birth control, hormones, and other gynecologic needs may easily be addressed through these visits. We will continue to see patients in person if they have urgent needs that require an exam or procedure. You can call the office to schedule an in-person or telehealth appointment, or you can request an appointment through your Athena portal.

We will continue to see OB patients as scheduled, but may space out less essential visits to decrease how often you need to come to the office. Visits with blood draws, ultrasounds and vaccinations will still continue uninterrupted. We would like to re-emphasize the importance of coming alone to your appointments (both OB and Gyn appointments).

All non-urgent gynecologic surgeries are being rescheduled to later this spring/summer. This helps us conserve resources for our hospital staff, nurses and doctors working on the front lines taking care of those with COVID-19.

Please try and route as many questions, refills, appointment requests, etc. through your Athena portal as we will have fewer than usual people answering phones. If you don't yet have access to the portal, please call the office to get this set up. You can also send us your email through our website.

Thank you for your patience and consideration as we try to limit interactions between staff and patients and do our part to encourage social distancing. The safety and well-being of our patients and staff is always our first priority.

We appreciate your cooperation and look forward to seeing you in the future.

Sincerely,

The Providers of Associates in Women's Health



Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What you need to know

Associates in Women's Health is closely monitoring the detection and spread of COVID-19, a respiratory illness first noted in Wuhan City, China. In conjunction with the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ACOG) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), we will continue to provide updated guidelines regarding travel and infection precautions. We encourage you to visit the CDC website at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for further information as developments emerge.

How does the virus spread?

The virus spreads with person to person contact mainly through droplets of fluid that a person coughs or sneezes into the air. It may also be spread if you touch a surface with the virus on it, such as a doorknob/handle or other objects, and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth.

Prevention

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. CDC recommends every day preventative actions to help prevent the spread of the virus, including:

- Wash your hands often with soap, for a minimum of 20 seconds.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap is not available.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth.
- Avoid contact with sick individuals.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with your arm, or use a tissue and immediately throw in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched areas.

Frequently asked questions

What should I do if I develop symptoms of a respiratory infection?

If you have a fever and cough, follow the steps below to limit the spread of infection to people in your home and community:

- Stay home except to get medical care. You should not go to work or public areas.
- At home, separate yourself as much as possible from family.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing with your elbow fold.
- Wear a mask to cover your nose and mouth if you are around other people in public (which you should not be!).
- Wash your hands after touching your face, before eating, and after using the bathroom. If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer with >60% alcohol.
- Avoid sharing personal household items.

- Clean all high touch surfaces every day, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, phones, keyboards, etc.
- Monitor your symptoms. If you feel your symptoms are worsening, contact your primary care provider.
- Check the CDC website for additional information:
<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick>

Is it safe to travel (including pregnant women)?

Travel advisories change as the spread of COVID-19 widens. We recommend avoiding all non-essential travel and checking the State Department and CDC websites for the most up-to-date information. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html>).

How does COVID-19 impact pregnant women and newborns?

Currently, there are no specific guidelines related to pregnancy. Based on limited data, pregnant women may be at higher risk for severe illness compared to the general population. We do not know if the virus can cross the placenta during pregnancy or if an infected mother can pass the virus to her infant. We are reassured by case reports showing healthy infants born to COVID-19 positive mothers, but more information is needed to make any final conclusions. We recommend that pregnant women take extra care in following the prevention guidelines described above.

I have a respiratory illness, should I continue to breastfeed?

We do not know whether mothers with COVID-19 can transmit the virus via breastmilk. We are again reassured by case reports where the virus was NOT found in the breastmilk of infected women. These are early scientific studies and more information is necessary to make any final conclusions.

The CDC recommends that a mother with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 should take all possible precautions to avoid spreading the virus to her infant. This includes washing hands before touching the infant and wearing a face mask while breastfeeding. If expressing breast milk with a manual or electric breast pump, the mother should wash her hands before touching any pump or bottle parts and follow recommendations for proper pump cleaning after each use. If possible, have someone who is feeling well feed the expressed milk to the infant.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/pregnancy-guidance-breastfeeding.html>

Are children more susceptible to COVID-19?

No. The vast majority of cases have occurred in adults based on population data. There is currently no evidence that children are more susceptible to the disease. There have been some reported infections in children; most children have mild symptoms of runny nose and cough with fever. Children should wash their hands with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer, avoid close contact with people who are sick and keep up-to-date on routine vaccines (such as in the influenza vaccine) to protect themselves from infection.

References:

ACOG.org. (2020). Practice Advisory: Novel Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) - ACOG. [online] Available at: <https://www.acog.org/Clinical-Guidance-and-Publications/Practice-Advisories/Practice-Advisory-Novel-Coronavirus2019>.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). [online] Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>.

Department of Public Health and Environment. (2020). 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19). [online] Available at: <https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/environmental-health/news/coronavirus-info.html>.