COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness caused by a new strain of a coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. This outbreak started in China, but has now spread to many countries, including the United States.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus is spread from person to person through close contact and respiratory droplets that are produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It may be possible to get COVID-19 through contact with a contaminated surface or object; however, this is not the main way the virus spreads.

What should I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms or think I’ve been exposed to the virus?

If you have symptoms or suspect exposure to COVID-19, complete an e-visit or call your provider first to avoid possible spread of the virus. Be ready to provide travel history, symptoms and possible exposure to someone with COVID-19. If you are not a Sanford Health patient, call My Sanford Nurse.

How do I complete an e-visit?

E-visits are available to patients with a My Sanford Chart account. Log in to your account to request an e-visit. If you don’t have a My Sanford Chart account but have previously been seen at a Sanford Health facility, you can create one.

Do I have to pay for an e-visit for COVID-19?

No. E-visits are currently offered for COVID-19 symptoms at no direct cost to the patient. E-visits for other symptoms cost up to $49.

How can we prevent COVID-19 from spreading?

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick and practice social distancing.
- Practice good respiratory and hand hygiene:
  - Cover your cough and sneezes.
  - Wash your hands often (for at least 20 seconds) and use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household clearing spray or wipe.

Who should wear a mask?

Not everyone needs to wear a mask.

- Patients with a cough or respiratory symptoms should wear a mask when in the hospital or clinic.
- Health care workers taking care of individuals with the virus need masks to protect themselves.
- The CDC does not recommend people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19.
How is COVID-19 treated?
Treatment for COVID-19 is supportive care (treating the symptoms). There are no antiviral or vaccine options at this time.

What are clinics, hospitals and other Sanford Health facilities doing to protect patients and the public?
- Medical centers, hospitals and clinics have implemented the following visitor restrictions:
  - Visitors are restricted to immediate family members only and one visitor per patient.
  - Family members are screened as they enter to make sure they are healthy before they can visit.
  - Access is limited to a few specific entry points in each facility to ensure better control of people entering/exiting each building.
- Long-term care facilities (both Good Samaritan Society and Sanford Health) are limiting visitors to only those medically or operationally necessary or related to end-of-life care. This is in line with ACHA recommendations.
- Non-care facilities like Sanford Wellness Centers and Sanford POWER facilities are closed until further notice.
- Patients in clinics are screened and possible infections are masked and isolated quickly.
- To the extent possible, we are providing space for social distancing.
- Sanford Health employees must clear screening guidelines before returning to work after travel, possible exposure or illness.

Can patients get prescriptions without visiting the pharmacy?
Yes. Sanford Health and many area pharmacies offer delivery and mail-order services. Patients should call their pharmacy to confirm these services are available.

Where can I go for information?
- CDC Information
- Sanford Health News