

Baptist Health Medical Group – Resuming In-Office Care

The following Questions and Answers may be helpful in responding to questions from the public – or friends/family – when asked about the Coronavirus.

(NOTE: Please continue to follow recommended screening/testing protocols in assessing patients.)

1) When will your practice be operationally ready to reopen for patients seeking care?

Effective April 27, Kentucky and Indiana have given guidance around resuming care for *non-emergent, non-urgent in-person visits*.

However, we will not be completely returning to normal, as things were before COVID-19. You'll notice extra precautions designed to protect both our patients and staff, and we will use a thoughtful and measured approach as we phase in services at our various facilities. We appreciate your patience, support and cooperation.

2) I have a doctor's appointment coming up at a Baptist Health Medical Group practice. What changes or processes are you implementing in your practices to ensure patient safety?

We have a very thoughtful, measured approach that first and foremost takes into account the safety of our patients and staff.

- We will continue with our **current visitation policy that restricts visitors** with the following exceptions: Patients **under age 18** (one parent); Dependent **patients who require assistance** (one caregiver); **Hospice or end-of-life patients** (one caregiver advised, but to be determined by provider).
- We will **continue screening all patients/visitors for symptoms prior to coming in** for an in-person office visit – at **time of scheduling, 24 hours in advance** of visit via phone call, and at **point of entry** with the goal of keeping any patient with COVID symptoms from coming to our practices in person. These patients would be offered a video visit as a start, and redirected to an Urgent Care Evaluation site, if appropriate.
- In addition to screening for symptoms at point of entry, **all visitors and patients will be required to wear a facial covering/mask** that meets the Center for Disease Control (CDC) requirements. Criteria includes:
 - Any **breathable fabric**, such as cotton sheets or tee shirts, that is large enough to cover the individual's nose and mouth.
 - Mask should have **two layers of fabric** and be **washed** frequently.
 - If you do not have a mask, one will be provided for you. Given that conservation of personal protective equipment remains critical, **we request that you bring your own mask**, if possible.
- We have implemented **non-traditional waiting room and check-in options** to limit close contact with others. Depending on the practice location, this may include patients waiting in vehicles and being notified when they can move to an exam room. We'll also ensure that we have appropriate physical distancing in our waiting rooms (more than 6 feet apart).
- Baptist Health recognizes not all individuals feel comfortable leaving their homes to receive care. Your safety is of utmost importance and Baptist Health will **continue to offer video and**

e-visit options, where possible. These visit options will allow you and your loved ones to meet with your provider, securely and confidentially.

3) What types of conditions/symptoms will be seen in-person by your offices?

We can see you in one of our offices for a wide range of conditions or symptoms, with the exception of patients with certain symptoms consistent with COVID-19. For the safety of all patients and staff, these patients will be seen only in our designated Urgent Care Clinics or on a virtual visit. For a current list of designated Urgent Care evaluation sites, visit <https://www.baptisthealth.com/covid-19/evaluation>.

All patients/visitors are screened for symptoms prior to coming in for an in-person office visit – at time of scheduling, 24 hours in advance of visit via phone call, and at point of entry with the goal of keeping any patient with COVID symptoms from coming to our practices in person.

Additionally, we will continue to highly encourage video visits as an option for care where appropriate.

4) If you refer me to telehealth services, what does that consist of?

Baptist Health Virtual Care is a service that connects you with a Baptist Health provider via your smartphone, tablet or computer for consultation and treatment for specific conditions, including COVID-19 symptoms.

Our Virtual Care services have been immensely helpful to prevent the spread of infection to other patients and in an effort to abide by the “Stay at Home” order as much as possible.

Virtual Care includes video visits and e-visits:

- **Video visits** require a smartphone, tablet or computer with a working camera on your device. This will connect you face-to-face via your device with a Baptist Health provider for treatment.
- **An e-visit** consists of the patient filling out a symptom-specific questionnaire online, and a Baptist Health provider will call you to discuss treatment options.

Both video visits and e-visits require a patient to have a MyChart account. Should the patient be scheduling a video visit, they should also have the Zoom app downloaded on their device prior to their scheduled appointment.

To sign up for MyChart, visit MyChart.BaptistHealth.com

For more information on Virtual Care, visit BaptistHealthVirtualCare.com

5) If you aren't seeing COVID-19 patients, why are you masking and screening everyone that visits your practice?

We do recognize that there are some patients with COVID-19 who are asymptomatic and therefore will not be identifiable through screening; therefore, the adherence to the continuous masking of both staff and patients will be of utmost importance. Additionally, we will work with our offices and providers to determine how to appropriately ramp up scheduled visits, keeping in mind those visits that can continue to be done via video visit.

6) If I feel I am experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, what should I do?

Select Baptist Health Urgent Care sites throughout Kentucky and Southern Indiana have been designated evaluation sites for those who may be experiencing mild or moderate symptoms of the coronavirus, or COVID-19. You can also schedule a Baptist Health Virtual Care video visit or e-visit (see above).

Designated Baptist Health Urgent Care clinics are available in Louisville, La Grange, southern Indiana, Lexington, Richmond, Corbin, Madisonville and Paducah, to test individuals who meet the screening criteria for COVID-19 and also have symptoms, including cough, fever and/or shortness of breath. For a current listing of designated sites, visit <https://www.baptisthealth.com/covid-19/evaluation>.

7) When will your practices be going back to business as usual?

Each of our clinics and practices have measures in place to both ensure the safety of our patients and staff while balancing the ongoing need to provide care in a timely, appropriate manner. The plan to bring back patients at "full load" in our clinics and practices will be a gradual approach over time so that we do ensure safety, and we will want to encourage video and e-visits, as appropriate.

8) I previously had a procedure scheduled that has been postponed. When can I reschedule my surgery?

Baptist Health Medical Group specialty practices that perform procedures and surgeries are phasing in a return to elective surgeries (procedures or surgeries that can be scheduled in advance), starting the first two weeks in May.

Anyone who has postponed surgery or a procedure needs to discuss timing with their doctor as to when they should reschedule. We want to be sure patients meet all pre-surgery requirements so they can have the best outcome.