Los Angeles County Department of Health Services COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

General Information

What is the coronavirus?

The new coronavirus is a type of virus that causes coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). COVID-19 is an infection of the airways and lungs.

What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can feel like those from the common cold or flu. They can be mild to severe. Some people may not have any symptoms and others may have 1 or more of the below symptoms:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills, with or without repeated shaking
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list does not include all possible symptoms. Most individuals can get better with rest and time, others may need medical care.

How does it spread?

The virus is spread from person to person through tiny droplets made when an infected person nearby coughs or sneezes. You can also get it by touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes before washing your hands.

Is there treatment?

No. Right now there is no vaccine or specific medicine to treat COVID-19. Resting, drinking fluids and taking acetaminophen (Tylenol) may make you feel better. Most patients will simply get better on their own.

How do I avoid getting COVID-19?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer for 20 seconds.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your elbow when you cough or sneeze.
- Stay at least six feet away from other people.
- Stay home if you are sick.

What should I do if I have symptoms?

- There is no need to see a doctor if you have mild symptoms.
- Call your doctor if you have a fever or cough AND are elderly, pregnant, have a weakened immune system or other major medical problems.
- If you have trouble breathing or having a medical emergency, please dial 9-1-1 or go to the nearest Emergency Department.

Can I be seen if I go to an emergency room?

Yes. If you are having a medical emergency, emergency rooms will care for you. To help you and our workers, emergency room staff will screen you for COVID-19 like symptoms and decide what treatment you need.

How long does COVID-19 infection last?

Most people with symptoms get them between 2 and 14 days after contact with a sick person. Most will simply get better on their own. But some people may have to be hospitalized. The elderly and those with underlying medical conditions are at highest risk.

Who can be tested for COVID-19?

Call the COVID-19 Nurse Advice Line at 844-804-0055 for medical advice. Currently, we are testing patients who have symptoms. The test for COVID-19 is free. To schedule an appointment at a county test site, go to covid19.lacounty.gov/testing.

Getting Care

Should I keep my clinic appointment?

We are switching all non-urgent clinic appointments to phone visits and postponing any visits we can. If you have an upcoming visit, our clinic staff will call you. If you want to cancel or reschedule, request a phone visit, or have questions about your upcoming visit, please contact your clinic.

Should I still go to my upcoming specialty care appointment?

The specialist will decide if the appointment cannot be delayed. If you have an upcoming visit, the clinic staff will call you if it needs to be rescheduled. We are only

making appointments for specialty care that cannot be delayed. If you have urgent questions regarding your visit, please call 855-521-1718.

Are facilities and clinics open? And have the hours changed?

Yes, all of our clinics are providing care and the clinic hours have not changed. There might be changes to how you get your care. To keep you safe and healthy during this coronavirus outbreak, we changed in-person clinic appointments to phone visits. Patients with appointments already made, are not being cancelled, but these could be scheduled for another date and time if a phone visit is not possible.

If you have an urgent need, our Urgent Cares are available to you. For more information on our urgent care services visit: http://dhs.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/dhs/services/urgentcare/

Is it safe to come to my clinic?

Yes. Your health and safety are our top priority. If you have urgent medical needs, then it is safe for you to go to your clinic appointment. If you do not have urgent medical needs, we encourage you to postpone your medical appointment.

Can I get Medical Advice from home?

By phone. First, call your clinic with questions about your health. You can also call our new COVID-19 Nurse Advice Line available from 7 AM to 7 PM PST, 7 days a week in addition to our physician after-hours line. You can reach our COVID-19 Nurse Advice Line by calling 844-804-0055.

Additionally, you can schedule a phone appointment or e-mail your doctor through the MyWellness patient portal.

What is the MyWellness patient portal and how do I sign up?

MyWellness is a secure website where you can email your doctor, access your lab results, and read your doctor's notes. If you are not already enrolled, go to http://dhs.lacounty.gov/mywellness and click "Enroll Now" to sign up today.

How can I fill my medicines?

You can get a 3-month supply with most prescriptions. Call 213-288-8480 or ask your pharmacy. You can also fill your prescriptions by mail. If you are already enrolled in the mail delivery program, call 800-500-1853 to use our phone refill system and we will mail it to you.

Can I still get my surgery?

We will call you to tell you if your surgery is still scheduled. You can also call or email your doctor's office to find out. We are not currently scheduling elective surgeries and procedures. Once the outbreak has passed, we will call to reschedule.

If I am healthy, can I visit my family member at the hospital?

In most cases, no. Routine visitors are not allowed until the spread of COVID-19 is no longer a threat to our patients, staff and community. We encourage you to keep in touch with your family and loved ones through other options such as Skype, FaceTime or the phone in the patient's room. For more information, please see our updated Visitor Letter.

Where can I get more information?

For information on the coronavirus (COVID 19), please visit the following: LA County Department of Public Health, U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the World Health Organization.