

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Outbreak Update

March 16, 2020

Dear Colleagues:

In order to provide updates on the evolving response and best practices in regards to the COVID-19 pandemic, AHP will be delivering brief, critical updates on an ongoing basis addressing important highlights and frequently asked questions.

Daily COVID-19 Update Call

AHP will be hosting a call at 12:15 pm each day to share new information and/or be available for provider questions and concerns. The pediatric primary care call can be accessed here: <https://urmc.zoom.us/my/rsuttonahp>. The adult primary care call will be conducted here: <https://urmc.zoom.us/j/5853530932>.

COVID-19 Support Line

UR Medicine has established a COVID-19 support line (888-928-0011) triaged by providers who will direct patients into the proper care setting based on their symptoms. Feel free to share this number with your patients, particularly if they are resistant to your assessment that they do not need to be seen or tested.

Definition of COVID-19 Exposure

It may be helpful for practices to know how COVID-19 exposure is being defined at UR Medicine when you are discussing exposure risk with patients. Exposure is defined as being within six feet of a COVID-19-infected person for at least five minutes. Contact with a person who has had interaction with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patient does not constitute exposure.

Personal Protective Equipment

We continue to work on acquiring any allocation of PPE supplies possible to be able to share with those in need. AHP has obtained a limited supply of N95s and delivered some today to practices most in need. Please note that following regarding masks:

- Standard procedure masks are recommended for initial evaluation and treatment of possible COVID-19 patients including collection of NP and OP swabs. These masks provide excellent droplet protection.
- However, AHP is providing N95s because we cannot obtain procedure masks.
- While most PPE is disposable and traditionally meant for single use, it is acceptable and recommended to reuse the materials as long as it is not saturated or no longer able to be effectively worn.
- Masks used in the care of suspected or confirmed COVID-19 patients are for one-time use only. ***If you suspect COVID enough to swab for it, then the mask you wore during that process must be discarded***

We understand that the next most urgent need relates to gowns, and we are hopeful that we will have some supply available to us later in the week (Thursday or Friday) to allocate to practices in the greatest need.

Testing Updates

For those who are swabbing for COVID within their offices, we learned today that you may order a

COVID test at the same time as one for seasonal flu. In the instance where you would like to test for both, please order both tests but submit for testing just ONE deep nasopharyngeal swab in a viral media tube. If swabbing for COVID alone, you may also use just ONE nasopharyngeal swab, which may be best practice in light of concern about testing supply shortages. Swabbing procedure can be viewed [here](#).

UR Medicine Lab will be coming online very soon for onsite COVID-19 testing, and once online, priority will be given to testing for COVID-suspect inpatients. If you are swabbing for COVID-19, your test may be resultated by UR Medicine Lab or it may be sent out to a reference lab, so the timeframe in which you will receive results back could realistically be anywhere between eight hours and four days. COVID-19 results will NOT be released into MyChart; providers are expected to contact their patients with these test results.

Non-Essential Visits

Some time was spent today on our call discussing how to define a “non-essential visit” should your practice decide to implement a policy to limit or completely restrict these types of visits. AHP provides the following guidance:

- All routine, “pre-scheduled” visits are largely considered non-essential.
- If they can be done safely and without high risk of exposure, all well-child appointments from birth through age six months should NOT be considered non-essential. It is important that these patients not miss critical vaccinations that could cause, for example, a child pertussis outbreak on top of coronavirus.
- Most routine screening such as mammography etc. should likely be delayed for the next couple of months.

Visitor Restrictions

Staff members in all UR Medicine hospital inpatient units have begun informing families that they will no longer be able to visit inpatients. The only stated exceptions are one guardian for pediatric patients and one support person for OB patients during labor and delivery. Exceptions for extreme circumstances such as end-of-life or proxies of patients who can't make health decisions will be limited and made on a case-by-case basis.

Telemedicine and Medicaid

The New York State Medicaid program announced that, effective for dates of service on or after March 13, 2020 and during the current State of Emergency only, New York State Medicaid will reimburse telephonic evaluation and management services to members in cases where face-to-face visits may not be recommended and it is medically appropriate for the member to be evaluated and managed by telephone. Click [here](#) for the full update.

We continue to partner with Dr. Mendoza and County Health Department officials on preparedness and response protocols and will convey information as it becomes available.

Thank you for your continued collaboration in this important public health endeavor.

All the best,

J. Chad Teeters, MD
Executive Medical Director, AHP



[UR Medicine Urgent Care Centers](#)

[Instructions for Home Isolation](#)

[Swabbing Procedures](#)

[Sample Office Signage](#)

[Screening Script](#)

COVID-19 Resource Links

American Academy of Pediatrics COVID-19 Site

<https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/>

Archive of AHP COVID-19 Updates

<https://ahpnetwork.com/category/news/covid-19/>

Monroe County Health Department

<https://www2.monroecounty.gov/health-coronavirus>

CDC Coronavirus Site

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

New York Department of Health Coronavirus site:

<https://www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/>

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