

COVID-19 and People With Cancer

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a new type of coronavirus that can cause mild to severe infections in the lungs. It can lead to serious illness for people with cancer or weakened immune systems, and may cause more severe illness than other viruses. A vaccine to help control its spread is in the near future, but distribution will take time.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus can spread from person-to-person very easily. It spreads when an infected person coughs, sneezes, breathes, sings, or talks. This produces respiratory droplets that can enter the eyes, nose or mouth of people nearby.

How can I protect myself?

These are some of the best ways to protect yourself and others from COVID-19:

- Wear a mask that covers your mouth **and** nose when around others.
- Avoid close contact from others who don't live with you.
- Maintain at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Use hand sanitizer with 60% or more alcohol until you can wash your hands with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth without washing your hands first.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. Regular household wipes and sprays can kill the virus. Be sure to clean places that people touch a lot, such as door handles, phones, keyboards and light switches.
- Avoid handshakes, hugging, and standing or sitting close to people.
- Avoid indoor spaces as much as possible, particularly ones that aren't well ventilated.
- Monitor your health daily. Be alert for symptoms including any fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste/smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.
- Limit errands, use of public transportation, and crowded areas.
- Postpone travel and stay home, if possible. If you must travel, please let your physician, nurse or care provider know as soon as possible so they can take steps to protect you, themselves and others before your next visit.
- Mind your health. Get plenty of sleep, drink lots of water, eat healthy, exercise and manage your stress.

If you are sick:

- Stay home. Don't leave except for medical care.
- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. If you use a tissue, throw it out right away and wash your hands. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your elbow crease.
- Stay away from other people and pets. If possible, stay in a specific room and use a separate bathroom. If you can't do these things, wear a mask at all times, even at home.
- Before going to treatments for your cancer, [call us so we can keep you and others safe.](#)

To help protect, you, other patients, and staff, please let us know about any recent travel or if you have had contact with a person known to have COVID-19.

What should I do if I have cancer?

Some people with cancer might have a higher risk of getting COVID-19 or having a serious illness from it. Do your best to follow the steps listed above to protect yourself. Ask your doctor or nurse if they have special recommendations based on your health or type of treatment.

Call your doctor right away if you:

- Have a fever higher than 100.4° F.
- Feel short of breath.
- Develop a cough, runny nose or congestion.

What if I care for or live with someone who has cancer?

If you are caring for or living with someone who has cancer, do your best to keep them from getting the coronavirus. Follow the steps to protect yourself listed on the front of this sheet. If you become sick yourself, call your doctor to see what more you should do to protect your loved one.

What about visitors?

To protect all patients, no visitors are allowed. Please check with your care team based on your specific needs if assistance is required.

How will Sharp HealthCare protect me from getting COVID-19?

Our hospitals and outpatient centers are taking steps to keep infected patients separate from those who may be at risk. At every appointment, your care team will ask questions about your overall health and recent travel. We may ask some patients to wait in a separate room, to reschedule until they are feeling better if they have any symptoms or to be tested.

All patients, doctors, and staff are screened prior to entering our facilities. Our caregivers always wear medical grade masks while in the hospital. Our facilities and equipment receive regular deep cleaning. High-tech disinfecting robots are used to help ensure hospital rooms and surgical areas are thoroughly clean. Hand sanitizer stations are also available in all locations.

Will you still care for me if I get sick?

Yes. Your health and care are our top priorities. Although we may change some ways we care for you, we will never put your care or health at risk.

What if I still have questions?

If you have more questions about how Sharp is addressing coronavirus, call **1-800-82-SHARP** (1-800-827-4277), **Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.**

For the most up-to-date information, visit sharp.com/coronavirus.