

Enhancing Access to Duke Health

Key Messages



Use these talking points to guide your conversations with patients and answer questions about how we're enhancing access to Duke Health. Please do not share this document with patients.

Commitment to caring: Duke Health's top priority is safety and protecting the health and well-being of our patients, visitors and team members.

Slowing the spread: You play an important role in protecting yourself, your family and our community. We are grateful to the community for their understanding and making key changes to significantly slow the spread of infection.

Postponing treatments and procedures: Rescheduling appointments, surgeries and procedures that could safely be slightly delayed was critical for our response. We are committed to rescheduling this care, and your provider will be in touch shortly if they have not already connected with you.

Phased approach: In our first phase, we are focusing on how we can safely continue to care for patients with COVID-19 while also enhancing access for our patients who may have delayed care during the pandemic. We are prioritizing the care of the sickest first — those with progressive illness or at a higher risk for disease. Then we will move to the next phase which will include expanding surgeries and procedures for patients at low risk for complications. Every step will be careful and measured.

Infection prevention policies: The safety of our patients and team members is our top priority. We want to assure you our processes follow CDC guidelines and recommendations — allowing us to provide quality care while keeping you, your family and our team safe and healthy.

Operation changes: We have made significant changes to operations to protect our patients, visitors and team members, including:

- Increased use of telehealth to connect with you, including phone or video visits
- Encouraging physical distancing and allowing extra time between appointments
- Enhanced visitor restrictions to limit the number of people in our facilities
- Expanded hours and appointments available on the weekend for some clinics
- Patient, visitor and employee screening prior to entering our facilities
- Mandatory masking and hand hygiene for all patients, visitors and team members
- Adding sanitizing stations to our facilities

Visitor restrictions remain to protecting our environment: For our outpatient clinics and facilities one support person is allowed to accompany you to an appointment, unless additional aide or assistance is required. Visitors will be screened alongside patients prior to entering the clinic. Currently no visitors are allowed for hospital inpatients with exceptions in limited instances, such as end-of-life care.

Virtual connection: We understand how important family and loved ones are to the care team. We encourage you to use FaceTime, Skype and phone calls to visit with loved ones in the hospital. To help patients who don't have access to devices to allow for virtual connection, we are working to provide resources so everyone can be surrounded by their support system during this difficult time.

Duke Health COVID-19 hotline: To help answer questions and appropriately care for patients as COVID-19 spreads in our community, Duke Health has established a hotline to identify and test patients with symptoms of the infection. Anyone can call at 919-385-0429 any day from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. to speak with one of our representatives. Remember to call your doctor before coming to a medical facility if you are sick or have been exposed to the infection to help us prevent the spread of illness.

Thank you: We are grateful for your patience and understanding while we work diligently to address this rapidly evolving situation and prevent the spread of infection.