

# Notice to Our Patients on the Coronavirus Outbreak

As your healthcare provider, we are doing everything we can to ensure the safety of our patients and staff. From the beginning of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) outbreak, we've been working closely with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and other agencies to stay up to date with the latest information. This situation is changing on an ongoing basis, and we will continue to update you as new and pertinent information is available. We are doing all we can to keep you and everyone in our communities safe and healthy.

- If you have recently traveled to areas where there are ongoing outbreaks of COVID-19 and develop fever with cough or shortness of breath within 14 days of your travel, or if you have had contact with someone who is suspected to have COVID-19, **please stay home and call our office at 828-322-4140 or your county health department.**
- **At this time Catawba Women's Center is not testing for the Coronavirus.** If you are concerned that you may have been exposed to Coronavirus and would like to be screened, please contact your county health department.
- If you think you may have been exposed to coronavirus or are experiencing symptoms, please call our office at 828-322-4140. **If you have a medical emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room.**

## At present, here are some things you should know

- According to the CDC: "For most of the American public, who are unlikely to be exposed to this virus at this time, the immediate health risk from COVID-19 is considered low."
- The CDC is now recommending that anyone who has traveled to a Level 3 country – even if they don't have any symptoms – to self-isolate for 14 days. As of March 9, 2020, these countries include China, Iran, Italy and South Korea. Instructions for self-isolation are on the CDC website.
- For the large majority of patients who may have flu-like symptoms, testing for Coronavirus is still not necessary. There are many reasons why someone may have fever, cough, shortness of breath. If you have severe symptoms that are getting worse, go to an emergency room as soon as you can.
- In addition, if you are limiting your exposure to the public or would like to reschedule your appointment for any other reason, we will be happy to do that and, if necessary, provide refills by request. If you have any other questions about your visit or scheduling a visit, contact us at 828-322-4140 or through your patient portal.

Finally, we all should be vigilant about the spread of germs – especially during cold and flu season. The best ways to protect yourself and those around you are to:

***Voluntary Home Isolation:*** Stay home when you are sick with infectious respiratory disease symptoms. At the present time, these symptoms are more likely due to influenza or other respiratory viruses than to COVID-19-related virus.

***Practice Respiratory Etiquette:*** Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then throw it in the trash can. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your bent elbow.

***Practice Hand Hygiene:*** Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60% to 95% alcohol.

***Take Environmental Health Action:*** Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces and objects like cellphones, keyboards and door knobs.

If you have not received a flu shot, while it won't protect from COVID-19, it is your best protection for the flu.

For additional information about steps you can take to protect yourself [click here](#).