

Live Oak Health Partners ENT and Allergy Coronavirus (COVID-19) Update

Our office is closely monitoring and assessing the evolving risk that COVID-19 poses to our community, patients and employees. We are committed to minimizing the transmission of this infection. Authorities at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that the general population is at low risk for serious complications from Coronavirus exposure. However, many of our patients have underlying conditions that could potentially make an infection with COVID-19 more severe.

Our office remains available for new patients and office visits based on urgency but we will be transitioning many patients to **telemedicine** appointments.

To ensure the office can remain open to best serve the needs for ALL of our ENT and ALLERGY patients, we are implementing the following:

If you have a new onset cough or fever, **DO NOT** come to the office. Call ahead and we can direct you to the appropriate care setting and reschedule your appointment. This is to protect you and all of our patients who are not ill.

If you are coming in for a scheduled appointments or to get your allergy shots we request the following:

BEFORE YOUR APPOINTMENT

- Plan ahead for social distancing (6 feet).
- For ADULTS, we ask that only the patient being seen come to the office. Please only one adult aid if needed.
- If you need someone to drive you please have them wait in the car unless you need help getting inside.
- For MINORS, we request that only one parent or guardian accompany the patient. No siblings please.

- Help us by asking yourself these questions before coming in for your appointment:
 1. Do you have a cough or worsening shortness of breath?
 2. Do you have a fever (greater than 100.4)?
 3. Have you been exposed to someone with the Coronavirus?
 4. Have you traveled internationally within the last three weeks or been to California, Washington, New York, Florida, Louisiana or Colorado?
 5. Have you been in a high-risk setting such as a cruise ship or long-term care facility?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, please call the office before coming to your appointment.

AT YOUR APPOINTMENT

- You will be greeted on the first floor and asked screening questions.
- Please help us maintain social distancing in our waiting rooms and sit at least 6 feet apart from other patients if possible.
- Please cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- If you are handed a mask, keep it securely attached around your nose and mouth for the entire visit. Please do not pull it down or off for any reason. Do not touch the mask.
- Prepare children to see masked and gowned providers. We don't want them to be scared when they walk in.
- Please turn cell phones off or place on silent.

ALLERGY SHOT CLINIC

Allergy shots were temporarily stopped due to uncertainty regarding COVID-19.

Immunotherapy is NOT considered an unnecessary medical treatment. We will resume shots the week of MARCH 30th at NEWLY scheduled times and weeks. You will be contacted directly.

For safety, we will be implementing STRICTER APPOINTMENT TIMES to prevent crowding.

Please pay close attention to your appointment times when coming in for allergy shots.

Everyone will be asked screening questions. Honesty is imperative.

After receiving your shot in your room, you will wait in the same room where you received your shot for 30 MINUTES. Of course, if you are experiencing any shortness of breath, rash, hives, or concerning changes you are to bring it to the staff's immediate attention.

Many patients are candidates for an EXTENDED SHOT SCHEDULE. This is an option for patients on maintenance dosing or with more mild symptoms. We are able to safely increase the time elapsed between injections to minimize exposure. For example, if you were coming in once a week for shots, you may be able to temporarily come in for shots every 2-4 weeks.

In rare cases, SUSPENDING allergy shots can be discussed on an individual bases.

If you would prefer to avoid coming in for shots weekly or with an extended schedule, we can provide SUBLINGUAL DROPS that can be done safely, daily, at home. These are NOT paid for by insurance. The cost varies due to the number of allergies you are being treated for and can be calculated for you. Because of the present situation we are offering the start up vials at a discounted rate of \$100 per vial instead of the normal \$150 price. The vials are measured to last for approximately 3 months. Maintenance vials will be \$100 every 3 months after.

WHAT YOU CAN DO AT HOME

- The most effective thing we can all do is to wash our hands with soap and water (or alcohol-based hand sanitizer when not available) and to avoid touching our faces.
- Stay home whenever possible and avoid crowds.
- If you have to go out, keep 6 feet between you and other people.

- Remember that the flu is still circulating. If you haven't had your flu shot this year, it is time to get it now. These are available through our primary care offices or at your pharmacy.
- Find out whether you are a candidate for the pneumonia vaccine. Both flu and coronavirus can result in pneumonia, which can be life-threatening. Adults over the age of 65 or others with certain chronic medical conditions may benefit from the vaccine.
- If you've been taking your asthma medication less than regularly, it is now time to take them daily as prescribed. Call your primary care physician if you need a refill or go to the emergency room if you have an asthmatic attack. Dr. Blair does not treat asthma.
- If you need prescription refills from our office, please call our office or your pharmacy.
- Check with your pharmacy early to ensure you have an adequate supply of all your medications.
- Stay informed! This is a rapidly changing situation. The CDC has the most current information about the virus, including everything you need to know about how the virus spreads, how to protect yourself and what to do if you get sick. Visit the [CDC website](#) for updates.

If you have symptoms such as new onset fever, cough or shortness of breath, call your primary care physician or in severe cases proceed to the Emergency Room

A fever is considered 100.4 F (38.0 C) or above.

WHAT WE ARE DOING IN OUR OFFICE

We are taking all the steps recommended by the CDC to minimize health care provider risk and reduce risk of any exposure to patients. These steps have been shown to be effective in avoiding transmission.

- Daily screening of staff
- Frequent disinfecting of common areas and between all in office patients
- All equipment will be sterilized before patient contact as usual
- Social distancing, no handshaking
- Patient-provider contact only on examination with gloves
- Use of masks and gloves along with routine hand hygiene
- Procedures involving the upper airway will be limited and only in necessary situations
- Daily review and update if necessary for current standard of care protocols
- Continued updates and communication with patients
- Elective surgeries postponed during this period to preserve essential resources and avoid unnecessary exposure

Working together, we can slow the spread of this virus and minimize its impact. Please let us know if we can do anything to help take care of you and your family.