Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information and Updates

What You Need to Know

The outbreak of respiratory illness caused by a new coronavirus, known as COVID-19, is cause for concern but not panic. The UVM Health Network Porter Medical Center is working with the Vermont State Health Department and our Network colleagues to coordinate our preparedness efforts based upon guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Our highest priority remains providing safe, quality care for all of our patients.

New Limitations to Visitors and Outpatient Appointments

Visitors to Helen Porter and the Hospital have been restricted until further notice.

Please review our updated policy at portermedical.org/patients-visitors/visiting-patients/

Preventing the Spread

REMEMBER! If you have a fever, cough and/or shortness of breath, call your primary care office first to speak to a provider. In the case of an emergency, please do not hesitate to seek care. Porter remains committed to caring for our community

Remaining at home may be the best option for the majority of our community members who get sick and our Porter practices will be adjusting patient schedules and reaching out to our Porter patients with information about upcoming appointments.

Basic preventive practices are those that we should be using all the time:
Clean your hands frequently – use portable alcohol hand sanitizer and wash your hands before you eat. Don't touch your face. Avoid crowded spaces. Avoid traveling to countries the CDC has highlighted as having widespread, sustained transmission. Social distancing is something that will become increasingly more important –schools, conferences and other organized activities will need to consider this on a case-by-case basis.

If you're sick, stay home. Clean your hands. Wash high-use surfaces every day. If you've been in a place where the virus is circulating, call your primary care doctor to get advice. Do not go to Porter Express Care or the Emergency Department to be evaluated for Coronavirus, but please **do come** if you need urgent medical help.

Symptoms

The symptoms are a cough, fever and shortness of breath. The symptoms are similar to the flu.

If you're sick, stay home, practice vigilant hand hygiene, and cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing. If you are experiencing cough, fever or shortness of breath, call your primary care office first to speak to a provider.

Call your doctor's office and describe your symptoms. They will be able to advise you on next steps.

Travel

If you recently came back from traveling and now have a cough. The first thing you should do is call your doctor's office and describe your symptoms. There is a lot of flu and cold going around, and the symptoms are similar. We don't want you to go to the Emergency Department or Urgent Care to be screened or tested—only if you have an urgent medical need.

We Are Ready

Porter's highest priority is to provide quality care to patients while maintaining a safe workspace for staff. Response protocols have been developed through the organization's significant experiences with similar health care scenarios. A multidisciplinary team is coordinating preparedness and tailoring plans as more information comes in from across the globe.

Expert Resources

Get the facts. Here are link to some helpful resources to keep you informed on the Coronavirus.

- CDC – US Coronavirus Updates
- NYS Department of Health
- UVM Health Network Updates