

Dr. Jensen & Dr. Wilson's COVID-19 Update and Tips

March 16/20

Our Reality

A lot has happened since our update of three days ago. There are three things that we want you to remember:

Do not panic

Purchasing a lifetime supply of toilet paper and bread only makes it hard for people in our community who don't have the resources to purchase a lot at once. Aim to have on hand the supplies to last you for about two weeks.

Prevent new cases

We don't want new cases to enter our community. If you have recently come home from travel, welcome back! Now please isolate yourself for 14 days.

Flatten the curve

Slowing the spread of this virus is our most important job, and only we as a community have the power to do this. Not the doctors. Not the nurses. Not even Public Health. This is our social responsibility. Our last newsletter has tips for doing this, but to summarize:

- practice social distancing by gathering in smaller groups, staying 1-2 meters from each other, and keeping your hands to yourself;
- wash your hands often;
- don't touch your face;
- keep our seniors' facilities free of this disease and do not enter them for 14 days after travel.



Tips for Making the Most of an Extended March Break

1. Get outside as much as possible. It is so wonderful to see so many people out walking and enjoying our town and trails.
2. Pop into one of our local businesses who are doing their part to flatten the curve.
3. Don't watch the news for hours at a time. Check it once or twice a day. And always check information you get with a reliable source, like Durham Public Health.
4. Find ways to support and encourage one another (especially our seniors) and to turn this into a community adventure. We would love it if you would share with us how you are doing your part to #flattenthecurve. Find us on Facebook or Instagram.
5. During this time you may be experiencing stress or anxiety. If so, please reach out. Get in touch with a neighbour or friend. Contact our local counsellors and churches; they are ready to support our community in this time.

When and How to Get Care

If you have a non-COVID-19 health concern

We really do want to hear from you! Don't neglect your health. Phone your family physician. At UHC you will be encouraged to book a telephone appointment rather than an in-person one as much as possible. We will make the clinic as safe as possible for those who need in-person appointments.

If you have an accident or emergency

Come to the ER as usual. Our doctors and nurses are there to help you. Do not delay treatment for emergencies, but please do not use our emergency room as a walk-in clinic.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, new cough, or difficulty breathing)

Use this [self-assessment tool](#) to determine if you need to seek further care. Upon completion, it is likely that you will be asked to seek assessment by Telehealth (1-866-797-0000), the Durham Public Health Department (1-800-841-2729), or your family physician. Do not rush off for a COVID-19 test, as it is unnecessary.

At UHC, we will have one physician available from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm to speak with you by phone should your family physician not be available. Our front desk will take your phone number and the doctor on call will phone you back as soon as possible.

Bottom line: if you have symptoms of COVID-19, we will be advising you to remain at home and self-isolate. Take acetaminophen for fever, drink lots of fluids, and binge watch your favourite Netflix series. (Word to the wise: Give *Contagion* or *Outbreak* a miss.)

If you experience worsening symptoms

Go to the Emergency Room and follow strict protocols.

A note about testing for COVID-19: A test is not going to impact what you do or how quickly you recover if you have COVID-19. The treatment remains the same: stay home and self-isolate. If you have no symptoms or mild disease you **DO NOT NEED A TEST**. We urge our residents to follow our recommendations above and not rush off to an assessment centre unless told to go by Public Health. Unfortunately we have been advised that plans for our assessment centre here in Uxbridge has been placed on hold.

Things are changing by the minute, but rest assured that we are in very close contact with our Public Health Lead, our command centre at Uxbridge Cottage Hospital/Markham Stouffville Hospital, our local Infectious Disease expert, and the family physician leaders in our new East York North Durham Ontario Health Team. Hang in there Team Uxbridge! This will be a new normal for us for some time and there is a role for everyone to play.

Carlye & Jennifer

Dr. Carlye Jensen is Chief of Staff of Uxbridge Cottage Hospital and Dr. Jennifer Wilson is President of Uxbridge Health Centre.

Assessment link: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-self-assessment>