



To Our Valued Patients and Community Members,

The George Washington University Hospital (GW Hospital) remains prepared to care for our community during the spread of COVID-19. Since January 2020, we have been working closely with our partners at the CDC, D.C. Department of Health; the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences; and The GW Medical Faculty Associates to take proactive, preparedness steps to keep everyone safe. We continue to follow all CDC guidelines.

To best support our patients and staff, we have established a separate coronavirus testing area, increased our cleaning frequency of high-traffic areas and public spaces, and continued to practice our high standard of infection prevention protocol, including hand hygiene and, when needed, personal protective equipment for everyone who may enter your patient care area. Given the rapidly evolving situation, we may be required to adjust our response in order to maintain the highest level of safety. Throughout this, we will remain prepared to serve the community.

Due to increased COVID-19 cases in the region, GW Hospital is temporarily restricting all visitors. Exceptions to this restriction can be made in special circumstances, and by prior approval by Incident Command, including:

- End of life care
- Two parents or caregivers of pediatric patients, as long as neither is symptomatic
- Labor and delivery – two visitors including the professional support person or postpartum helper

Please call 202-715-4195 to inquire about approvals for exceptions. Approved exceptions are subject to screening, and will be prohibited if they have been in contact with someone with fever, cough or influenza-like symptoms within the last 48 hours, and/or have traveled to an affected country, as currently identified on the CDC. Also, we will require individuals to perform hand hygiene entering the facility, and entering and exiting a patient room.

The CDC recommends individuals and families follow everyday preventive measures:

- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue, then dispose of the tissue.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; if soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with 60–95% alcohol.
- Routinely clean frequently touched surfaces and objects.
- Stay home when you are sick with respiratory disease symptoms.

The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from coronavirus. You should only wear a mask if a health care professional recommends it or if you have the virus and are showing symptoms.

We recognize that this is a difficult and stressful time. Throughout this, GW Hospital stands here ready to care for our community. Together, we will overcome this virus. I hope you and your loved ones stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Russo, MBA, MS
Chief Executive Officer
The George Washington University Hospital