

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Information

FOR MOST PEOPLE, GETTING CORONAVIRUS WILL BE A MILD ILLNESS REQUIRING NO MEDICAL ATTENTION BUT OLDER PEOPLE AND PEOPLE WITH CHRONIC DISEASES MAY EXPERIENCE A MUCH MORE SERIOUS ILLNESS.

In Albany, we are very fortunate to be living in one of the most isolated cities in the world and with sensible precautions, we should be able to contain the spread of the virus and reduce the impact on ourselves, our families and our communities. We have a low population density meaning that most housing is quite spread out – this will limit the spread of the virus. We all have a role to play in reducing the spread of the virus until a vaccine can be developed. Once developed, a vaccine will need to go through clinical trials and it is likely that we will not have a vaccine until next year. The 2020 flu vaccine will not protect you against Coronavirus but is highly recommended as it may protect you against other flu viruses that are circulating at the moment.

Given that this virus will be around for the months to come, we need to all be sensible and play our part to ensure our safety.

People with Coronavirus (COVID-19) may experience fever, cough, sore throat, aches, tiredness and breathlessness. The virus is spread through very fine droplets that are passed from person to person as we breathe, or cough in close proximity to an infected person. The virus can also be passed by touching contaminated surfaces.

As of Monday 30th March, 2020 you can have a Telephone consult or a Telehealth consult (utilising Skype), which will be covered by Medicare.

NO-ONE SHOULD BE PRESENTING TO THE SURGERY UNLESS A PHYSICAL EXAMINATION IS REQUIRED – THE DOCTOR WILL TELEPHONE YOU FIRST AND IF REQUIRED HE WILL ASK YOU TO PRESENT TO THE SURGERY.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Our Practice has a Zero Tolerance Policy and any abuse will NOT be tolerated. Our frontline staff are working hard and putting their lives at risk to ensure all our patients are protected and cared for. If you do abuse our staff, you will be terminated by the Practice immediately. Thank you.

What you can do now:

1. Look after yourself AND your community

- Stop smoking – ask your doctor for help with this if you are struggling to quit. Smokers are more likely to get a more serious illness if they are infected with the virus.
- Eat healthily. There is plenty of food available and it is important not to hoard essential items as this will make it harder for everyone. The outbreak is likely to take months to settle down and so we will all need to make regular trips to the shops.

- Look after your mental health. This can be a very anxious and worrying time and you should consider reducing the amount of time you listen to the news or read social media. Avoid both before bedtime. Get plenty of sleep. Maintain your fitness levels
- Help those in need – consider your vulnerable neighbours who may need help with shopping and other household activities. If your friends or family members are frontline staff and have children in school, consider helping them during the Easter break so that they can attend work.

2. Reduce the spread of the virus

- Social distancing: avoid crowds and try to keep 1.5 metres from people. No shaking hands or hugging. This includes our waiting room and consulting rooms.
- Do not touch the door handles in the practice.
- Hand washing: use soap and water or hand sanitiser, especially before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hand: use a tissue or your elbow and wash your hands after.
- If you are told to self-isolate, please follow the instruction. This is for the protection of everyone.

