

## Instructions for Patients Prior to Surgery

**For your health and the safety of staff and other patients, we want to ensure you minimize your chance of getting COVID-19 in the time leading up to your surgery**

### Self-Isolate

Self-isolate for 14 days before the day of surgery (or as long as possible, if less than 14 days before your surgery). More information on self-isolation is available through [Public Health Ontario](#) (web address on page 2) or scan the code to the right. This includes refraining from going for groceries.



Self-isolating is the best way to protect yourself getting COVID, and lowering the risk of exposing others at the hospital (even if you don't have symptoms).

Early data suggests that if you develop COVID in the post-operative period (from exposures before or after surgery), rates of complications and even death increase significantly. For this reason, we also recommend self-isolation *after* your procedure. Ask your surgeon for details.

### Masks/face coverings do reduce the risk of spread

- Wear a mask or face covering even at home, when you are within 6 feet (or 2 meters) of anyone
- This can be any face covering or mask (including cloth) you have access to
- Household contacts should also wear a mask whenever they are within 6 feet of you. This is especially important if people you live with work outside the home
- Your driver when coming to hospital should also wear a face covering

### Hand Hygiene

- Wash your hands frequently for at least 15 seconds with soap and water or hand sanitizer
- Avoid touching your face
- Disinfect common touch surfaces regularly

### Monitor Exposures or Symptoms

**Immediately notify your Surgeon and/or the Hospital if any of the following occur:**

- You have contact with anyone with an acute respiratory illness (ie. Cold Symptoms) or travelled outside of Ontario in the past 14 days
- You have contact in the last 14 days with anyone who has had COVID or was suspected to have COVID
- You yourself are diagnosed with COVID
- You develop any symptoms related to COVID (we screen all patients with the most up to date definitions. A link to Public Health's definition is at the bottom of page 2, or scan the code to the right.

The most common symptoms include:

- Fever (> 37.8 Celsius).
- New or worsening cough
- New or worsening shortness of breath
- Sore throat, Hoarse voice, Difficulty swallowing
- Decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell
- Chills
- Headaches (new or unexplained)
- Unexplained fatigue/malaise/myalgias (sore muscles)
- Nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain



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- Pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- Runny nose / sneezing Nasal Congestion without other known cause
- If you are over 70: delirium (new confusion), unexplained falls or worsening of a chronic disease

## Pre-operative COVID testing

If you require a pre-operative COVID test, we will schedule you for a test shortly before surgery through the OSMH COVID-19 Assessment Centre. Be sure to answer your phone when booked for surgery so we can reliably contact you.

## Day of Surgery

- Continue to Self-Monitor for symptoms listed above – call the hospital if you develop them
- Plan to have someone drop you off at the front entrance; a staff will assist you to register and guide you to the preoperative area
- Wear a mask
- Try to avoid the use of public transportation

## Visitors

- There will be no visitors allowed in the hospital, not even to accompany you on the day of surgery (exceptions may include children < 18; adults with cognitive impairment; language barrier, extreme mobility problems)
- A support person with a working cell phone must be available to pick you up within 15 min of a call from our Staff. This will help us maintain social distancing in waiting rooms, helping to keep you, other patients and staff safe
- If you want a friend or family member to receive information on how to track the progress of your surgery, please bring with you written contact information that will accompany through your stay

## Possibility of Cancellation

OSMH and its Surgeons are doing everything possible to continue to provide quality care within the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic. That said, there is always the possibility of unanticipated factors that may cause cancellations of procedures, even up to and including the day of surgery. Rest assured we monitor our resources on a daily and weekly basis.

## Possibility of COVID exposure

The nature of the virus indicates that even asymptomatic people can transmit disease. This means despite all efforts to ensure staff and patient safety (Daily staff screening, testing of symptomatic employees, wherever possible, self-isolation of patients prior to admission, etc.), there will always be a small possibility of being exposed to COVID-19 in any public space including our Hospital. Patients need to consider this fact when determining if surgery is right for them at this time.

## How to Self-Isolate

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/factsheet-covid-19-how-to-self-isolate.pdf>

## Most recent screening tool from Public Health

[http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019\\_patient\\_screening\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/2019_patient_screening_guidance.pdf)