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Preparing for Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The global epidemic of COVID-19 which is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus is continuing to grow globally with an increasing number of cases diagnosed in the Massachusetts area. All of us at Faith and Family Supportive Care & Hospice are dedicated to ensuring that our entire organization, patients and communities remain safe and healthy during this situation.

We are also ensuring that the risk of transmission is minimized through the use of environmental cleaning and the appropriate use of hand sanitizers.

When should I call my doctor and my Faith & Family Supervisor?

You have a fever, cough or shortness of breath, or

You have traveled internationally to China, Italy, South Korea, Iran, or Japan in the past 14 days, or

You have been in close contact with a lab-confirmed case of COVID-19

What can we do to keep from getting sick? And what do we do if we get sick?

While there is a great deal in the news right now, the actual risk of becoming sick with COVID-19 remains low here in Massachusetts. Ensuring good hand washing, covering your cough/sneeze, avoiding contact with people who are ill and staying home when ill are measures everyone can take to avoid illness. Many, if not most patients diagnosed with COVID-19 develop only mild to moderate illness and do not require hospitalization.

Who needs a test for COVID-19?

Currently, testing for the virus which causes COVID-19 is generally only recommended by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for persons who have recently returned in the prior 14 days from a geographical region with high rates of transmission or who are close contacts of persons diagnosed with COVID-19 disease. At present, it is recommended that persons without symptoms, even if they were exposed to COVID-19, do not need to have testing for COVID-19.

What else can I do to avoid getting sick?

We want to remind people that at the current time the CDC recommends against travel to geographical areas with high rates of transmission (as of 3/11/2020 including China, Iran, Italy, and South Korea) for all patients, and patients who may be elderly or on treatments which compromise the immune system are recommended to not travel to CDC Level 2 countries (As of 3/11/2020 including Japan.) Please note that the list of geographical areas that may be included as having a high risk for COVID-19 relating to the ongoing transmission may be subject to change and patients are encouraged to check on the CDC website for guidance relating to travel.

Flu season continues, and it is not too late to get a flu shot if you haven't gotten one. As always, we encourage everyone to practice hand hygiene—washing frequently throughout the day with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

We also recommend visiting the CDC website, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health website, and our website for additional coronavirus information.

Below are some helpful direct links:

FAQs: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

Prevention and Treatment: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/prevention.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronaviruses%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fprevention-treatment.html

What to Do if you are sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/steps-when-sick.html>

How COVID-19 Spread: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>

CDC Situation Summary: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/summary.html>

Current Cases in Massachusetts: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-cases-quarantine-and-monitoring>