COVID-19:
Information for families of admitted patients

We Care Together!

St. Maarten Medical Center
WHAT IS COVID-19

COVID—19 is a respiratory disease caused by a novel (new) coronavirus that was first detected in China and has now been detected in more than 100 countries across the world.

HOW DOES THE VIRUS SPREAD?

The virus spreads from person-to-person contact through droplets after a person coughs or sneezes into the air. The virus can spread through contaminated surfaces which have these droplets on them (doorknobs, etc.). It is important to avoid touching your face (eyes, nose and mouth) as this is causes spread.

What are the symptoms?

Fever  Cough  Fatigue  Sore throat  Shortness of breath

Symptoms can vary from mild to severe but include fever, cough, fatigue, and shortness of breath.

MY RELATIVE HAS BEEN ADMITTED TO SMMC. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If your relative has been admitted to St. Maarten Medical Center (SMMC) for COVID-19 related complaints you should:

- **Stay calm.** COVID-19 may seem scary but stay calm and know that our Doctors and Nurses are doing everything they can to help your relative.
• **Refrain from visiting SMMC.** Once a COVID-19 patient is admitted to the hospital, the patient goes into isolation. As is the protocol with all isolated patients, the patient is not allowed to have any visitors. **Once per day, the Nurses will provide you with an update on the patient’s condition. You may also keep in touch with the patient via the patient’s mobile telephone if the patient is stable.**

• **Immediately go into self-isolation and inform your General Practitioner via phone.** If you have been in contact with the patient, you are at risk for contracting the virus. Inform your General Practitioner and follow all of his/her instructions.

• **Clean and disinfect all areas that the patient may have come into contact with.**

![Image of cleaning supplies](image)

**CLEANING AND DISINFECTION AT HOME**

**Clean and disinfect** — regular household soap or detergent should be used for cleaning and rinsing followed by disinfecting with a solution with a ratio of 1:10. of one (1) part regular household bleach to nine (9) parts water, all parts being equal. To allow for proper disinfection, the surface should be wet for at least ten (10) minutes.

• **Clean and disinfect** daily surfaces that are frequently touched in the room where the patient is being cared for such as bed sides, tables, bedframes and other bedroom furniture.

• **Clean and disinfect** bathroom and toilet surfaces at least once (1 x) daily.
• Reusable gloves should be **cleaned and disinfected**.
• Gloves and protective clothing (plastic aprons) should be used when cleaning surfaces or handling clothing or linen soiled with body fluids.
• Single use gloves should be discarded and proper hand hygiene should be practiced upon removing the gloves.
• Place contaminated laundry into a laundry bag. Do not shake soiled laundry and avoid contaminated materials coming into contact with skin and clothes.
• Waste generated from direct care in which body fluids were involved, should be placed in a garbage bag tied and disposed of as regular waste.

**PREVENTION**

**How do I protect myself against COVID-19 infection?**

Unlike influenza (Flu), there is no vaccine available for COVID-19 at this time.

The best way to prevent infection is to avoid exposure. The following prevention measures are recommended:

• Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap is not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
• Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
• Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
• If you are sick, do not go to work and do not travel. Stay home.
• When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue and throw it directly into a trash bin, then wash your hands with soap and water. If you do not have a tissue, cough/sneeze into your upper arm or sleeve; avoid using your hands.
• Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

**Should I start wearing a mask while at work or in public?**

We do **NOT** recommend people that are well wear facemasks.
MEDICAL INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

What should I do if I develop symptoms of a respiratory infection?
If you have a fever and cough, follow the steps below to help limit the spread to people in your home and community:

- Stay at home except to for medical care. You should not go to work, school, or public areas.
- Separate yourself at home as much as possible from family.
- Cover your mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing.
- Wash your hands after touching your face, before eating, after using the bathroom. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol.
- Avoid sharing personal household items.
- Clean all high touch surfaces every day such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, phones, computer keyboards.
- Monitor your symptoms. If you feel your symptoms are worsening, contact your healthcare provider.

NON-EMERGENCY CARE

- If you are experiencing mild symptoms and have questions or need advice, please call the Collective Prevention Services (CPS) hotline at 914 (or +1 721 542-1122 or +1 721 542-1222).
- Please do not come to the hospital unless instructed to do by CPS.

EMERGENCY CARE

- If you require acute emergency care (e.g. difficulty breathing), please call the Ambulance Services hotline at 912 (or +1 721 542-2111) for further assistance and/or instructions.
How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

1. Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds

1. Wet hands with water;
2. Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;
3. Rub hands palm to palm;
4. Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;
5. Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;
6. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;
7. Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;
8. Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;
9. Rinse hands with water;
10. Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;
11. Use towel to turn off faucet;
12. Your hands are now safe.
How to Handrub?

RUB HANDS FOR HAND HYGIENE! WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED

Duration of the entire procedure: 20-30 seconds

1a. Apply a palmful of the product in a cupped hand, covering all surfaces;
1b. Rub hands palm to palm;

2. Right palm over left dorsum with interfaced fingers and vice versa;
3. Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;
4. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;

5. Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;
6. Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;
7. Once dry, your hands are safe.
Contact information

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References

Centers for Disease Control (CDC).
*What to do if you are sick.*

*If are sick or caring for someone.*

World Health Organization (WHO).
*Home care for patients with COVID-19.*

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