

COVID-19

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

As a cancer patient, am I at additional risk for catching COVID-19?

Patients with compromised immune systems, including many cancer patients, are more susceptible to viruses, including COVID-19. Some cancer therapies, such as targeted drugs, steroids, as well as some cancer types, like blood cancers, can result in a weakened immune system.

Should I wear a facemask?

The CDC does not recommend that the general public wear facemasks. Facemasks are recommended for those who are sick or caring for someone who is sick.

What precautions is NYOH taking as a result of the COVID-19 situation?

Whether you are a patient, caregiver, or close to someone with cancer, please know New York Oncology Hematology is deeply committed to the wellbeing of our patients. NYOH is closely monitoring COVID-19, including the latest updates from the New York State Department of Health and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In addition, NYOH has made several important patient & appointment changes:

1. **Do not come to our office and call before your appointment if you:**

Are experiencing a fever, cough or difficulty breathing

AND

Have traveled to China, Iran, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Italy or other areas impacted by the Coronavirus (2019-nCoV) within the past 30 days

AND/OR

Have been in close contact with an individual under investigation for the Coronavirus or an individual who has a laboratory confirmed case of the Coronavirus

An NYOH nurse will speak with you to determine next steps regarding your care.

2. **Limited guests at appointments:** For the safety of our patients and staff, **one visitor** will be allowed to accompany patients to exam rooms. **No visitors** will be permitted in the infusion area. While we recognize this change may be disruptive, we know limiting guests to clinical areas is one way to reduce the risk of infection to cancer patients from the general public.
3. **Repeated screenings:** You may be asked screening questions multiple times during your visit. We ask for your patience. Please know this is done to ensure your safety as well as other patients and staff.

We apologize in advance for any inconvenience or disruption these changes may cause. They have been implemented for your safety, and we appreciate your cooperation.

Will NYOH close or stop providing treatment?

NYOH has no plans to close or stop providing treatment. We are working hard to ensure that every patient continues to receive the care they need.

NYOH has already adopted CDC-recommended protocols for healthcare providers regarding COVID-19. Preventative measures include:

- **Hand hygiene (washing hand with soap and/or alcohol-based sanitizers)**
- **Procedures in place to isolate patients who come into our locations exhibiting respiratory or flu-like symptoms.**

As a cancer patient, if I am at higher risk, how can I protect myself?

You, your caregivers, and close contacts can take proactive measures to protect yourselves and those around you from COVID-19, including these common-sense prevention steps:

- **Wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds and frequently. If soap and water are unavailable, use alcohol-based hand rub.**
- **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Throw tissues in the trash.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.**
- **Avoid close contact with sick people.**
- **Stay home if you are not well.**
- **Avoid large crowds while receiving therapy.**
- **Disinfect frequently touched surfaces with household cleaning spray or wipe.**
- **Call New York Oncology Hematology *first* if you have concerns.**

What should I do if my caregiver has traveled to China or other locations where the COVID-19 outbreak is severe?

You should avoid contact with anyone, including a caregiver, who has traveled to locations where the COVID-19 outbreak is severe for at least 14 days upon their return. If you or anyone you have already been in contact with have traveled to these locations, please contact NYOH before visiting our offices.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regularly updates travel advisories and information related to travel and COVID-19. If your caregiver or close contact is sick, encourage them to seek medical attention, and avoid contact with them until they well.

Where can I get more information?

As the COVID-19 situation changes, NYOH will continue to keep our staff and patients updated. For more information, we recommend the following resources:

- **New York State Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Hotline:** 1-888-364-3065
- **New York Oncology Hematology:** newyorkoncology.com/corona/
- **New York State Department of Health:** health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus/
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** cdc.gov/coronavirus