



SHOREWOOD FAMILY MEDICINE

Vincent R. Benig, M.D.
Family Practice

March 16, 2020

Dear patient,

As a family physician, I want to reach out to you about CoVid-19 and the community we share. Not only am I a physician in Shorewood, I am a resident of the community, a parent of children in the local schools, a member of a Shorewood church, and a patron of the local businesses. I care about my family, my office staff, my patients, and the community as a whole. The clinic will continue to operate because of the necessity to the community.

As you know, the CoVid-19 is a world pandemic. We as a community will travel through this uncharted territory together as our knowledge and CDC recommendations change over time.

What should you expect when coming to the clinic?

Feel comfortable coming to the office if you need medical care. If you have a non-urgent matter, you are still welcome to keep or make an appointment. If you would like to postpone your appointment, especially over the next couple weeks, that would be fine as well.

If you have a fever or respiratory symptoms, please notify our office before entering the waiting room by knocking on the door or calling. The staff will hand you a mask to use before walking in.

Our office has adjusted to this situation. As most of you already know, we are mindful to keep all disease from spreading person-to-person. For ten years, we have kept the office clean, kept the time in the waiting room brief, sanitized the exam room after every patient visit, and sanitized the bathroom throughout the day. We have always had hand sanitizers in each exam room and in the waiting room. Last week, we expanded the frequency of sanitization of commonly touched surfaces. We have minimized pen use and sanitize after each use. We have decreased the time in the waiting room even more.

How do we process this as a community?

CoVid-19 is in Illinois and spreading. I want to calm the fears of the community and at the same time grow a healthy respect and concern for this disease.

- Take comfort that the vast majority of us will be ok whether or not we get the virus (80% are mild cases). Some will get sick and recover completely. Some will get critically ill.
- As of today, we do not have enough tests for everyone, but we are expecting an increased supply.



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- Our goal as individuals and as a community is to protect the most vulnerable population (people with chronic illness and older people). To accomplish that goal, we need to slow the spread and flatten the growth curve. Clinics, ERs, and ICUs would be overwhelmed if everyone gets sick all at once, making it difficult to properly care for the vulnerable.
- All the drastic measures taken this past week will slow the spread, keeping resources available to care for the critically ill. When the growth rate flattens, gatherings will resume.

Reminders

- If we are sick with an illness, we must do our best to self-quarantine—especially since testing is limited. If we have a mild illness, and would not normally seek medical care, it is ok to stay home.
- Since the virus can spread before symptoms begin, we must take seriously the recommendations of hand hygiene and social distancing. When sports, schools, events and work start up again, it is the hand-hygiene and social distancing that will keep the spread slow.

This is just a brief synopsis that might be outdated tomorrow. For accurate information, I recommend **CDC.GOV**. There is a link at the top for CoVid-19 and good information for you if you are sick. I would avoid social media, news outlets, or “Great Aunt Selma” as your main source of information. I am optimistic for our community and am praying for everyone.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vincent Benig'.

Dr Vincent Benig
Family Physician
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