



# MARTHA'S VINEYARD HOSPITAL

## Frequently Asked Questions COVID- 19

*Updated: Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

**Q: What should I do if I have symptoms of COVID-19?**

**A:** If you are ill and believe you may have COVID-19, call your primary care provider. You will be screened over the phone to determine if you reach the necessary criteria for testing. We encourage everyone to call before arriving to the hospital with COVID-19 symptoms to minimize potential exposure to staff and patients.

Our call center has increased capacity and hours for proper COVID-19 screening. Monday through Friday, the call center is open from 8am-7pm. Providers will be on-call outside of these hours at the same number. This service is available to all members of the community, whether or not you are a patient of MVH Primary Care. Call Center Number: 508-684-4500

If you have an emergency and require medical attention, call 911 or go to the MVH Emergency Room.

**Q: Does MVH have the capability to test for COVID-19?**

**A:** MVH has the ability and capacity to collect samples needed for the coronavirus (COVID-19) test, however all testing is done by the MA Department of Health (DPH). This is the process every hospital in the state is following.

**Q: Should I be tested for COVID-19?**

**A:** If you are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 or if you have been in a community where there is ongoing spread of COVID-19 and develop symptoms of COVID-19, call your healthcare provider and tell them about your symptoms and your exposure. They will decide whether you need to be tested, but keep in mind that there is no treatment for COVID-19 and people who are mildly ill may be able to isolate and care for themselves at home.

For detailed information, visit the CDC's webpage: [Testing for COVID-19](#)

You can also call 2-1-1, a 24-hour state-supported telephone hotline.

**Q: Is MVH conducting voluntary COVID-19 testing?**

**A:** Currently, MVH is not conducting voluntary COVID-19 testing. Testing requires prior screening by a provider and necessary criteria must be met.

We urge you to not come to the hospital to request a test without calling ahead unless you are severely ill.

**Q: I've been tested for COVID-19. How long will it take to receive my results?**

**A:** Results are typically available 72 hours after the sample is taken.

**Q: Has there been a confirmed COVID-19 case in Dukes County?**

**A:** As of Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> there has not been a confirmed case in Dukes County.

**Q: Can MVH patients or Windemere residents have visitors?**

**A:** As of Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, no visitors will be allowed in Martha's Vineyard Hospital or Windemere.

This is being done as a difficult but necessary step to protect our patients and Windemere residents, who are at a high risk in this epidemic, and our staff who need to be able to deliver care. In addition, patients will not be allowed out of the facility to meet any visitors. Exceptions may be made for labor and delivery or end-of-life care as instructed by patients' care team.

**Q: Is the MVH café closed to visitors? As a visitor, can I still get take-out food?**

**A:** As of Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, the MVH Café is closed to visitors for both dine-in and take-out.

**Q: I have an upcoming appointment scheduled at MVH. Is it cancelled?**

**A:** MVH is currently in the process of cancelling all non-essential visits to the hospital including routine clinic visits and rehab visits (with some exceptions). MVH employees are doing their best to reach out to all patients with upcoming appointments. If you haven't heard anything from your provider's office, please reach out to the office to confirm that your appointment is still on.

**Q: I have an upcoming surgery at MVH. Is it cancelled?**

**A:** All elective surgeries have been cancelled for the next six weeks (from the week of 3/16) to preserve critical supplies. Patients will receive a call to reschedule.

**Q: Who is most vulnerable to COVID-19?**

**A:** The CDC has identified that older adults and people who have serious chronic medical conditions (heart disease, diabetes, etc.) are at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness.

**Q: What is social distancing and what is my role in it?**

**A:** Social distancing is a public health practice that encourages people to maintain a distance between you and other people. In the current case of the COVID-19 pandemic, experts recommend at least six feet between people. The public is also encouraged to minimize contact with people and avoid gatherings of more than 10 people.

Everyone should practice social distancing as best they can. Even people who don't have any risk factors, show only mild symptoms, or show no symptoms at all may pass the virus to others and contribute to the rapidly growing pandemic.

## **GENERAL:**

### **Q: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?**

**A:** The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are mild symptoms, including a runny nose, sore throat, cough, fever and severe cases, difficulty breathing. Symptoms may appear 2-24 days after exposure.

### **Q: Can someone who has had COVID-19 spread the illness to others?**

**A:** Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others. That is why CDC recommends that these patients be isolated either in the hospital or at home (depending on how sick they are) until they are better and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

How long someone is actively sick can vary so the decision on when to release someone from isolation is made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with doctors, infection prevention and control experts, and public health officials and involves considering specifics of each situation including disease severity, illness signs and symptoms, and results of laboratory testing for that patient.

### **Q: How contagious is the coronavirus?**

**A:** The coronavirus has been shown to spread easily within some geographic areas. Confined spaces create a higher risk for the disease to spread. The virus can be spread between people who are in close contact with one another or through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. Because COVID-19 is a new disease, there is still information to be learned about how it is spread.

### **Q: Can someone who has been quarantined for COVID-19 spread the illness to others?**

**A:** Quarantine means separating a person or group of people who have been exposed to a contagious disease but have not developed illness (symptoms) from others who have not been exposed, in order to prevent the possible spread of that disease. Quarantine is usually established for the incubation period of the communicable disease, which is the span of time during which people have developed illness after exposure. For COVID-19, the period of quarantine is 14 days from the last date of exposure, because 14 days is the longest incubation period seen for similar coronaviruses. Someone who has been released from COVID-19 quarantine is not considered a risk for spreading the virus to others because they have not developed illness during the incubation period.

### **Q: What can I do to prevent me and my loved ones from contracting the coronavirus?**

**A:** Wash your hands, wash your hands, and wash your hands. This is by far the best protection from any virus, including the coronavirus. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based

hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Also:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

**Q: Do I have to self-isolate if I have recently traveled?**

**A:** The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has revised their recommendations and are now recommending that all people returning from a level 3 country (China, Italy, Iran and South Korea) self-isolate for 14 day after leaving that country. If symptoms develop, they should contact their health care provider.