



## Frequently Asked Questions: COVID- 19 and Visiting Martha's Vineyard Hospital

*Updated: Monday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020*

### COVID-19 Testing

#### 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. 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 617-724-7000, the Partners Coronavirus Hotline available to the public.

#### 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. Test results are typically available 2-3 days after collection

You can also call 617-724-7000, the Partners Coronavirus Hotline available to the public.

#### 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. Is MVH conducting antibody tests?

A. Outpatient antibody testing is not currently available at MVH. In the absence of symptoms of COVID-19, serological testing has no role in clinical management at this time. There is still substantial uncertainty and variability regarding the available tests and clinical interpretation of the results. Antibody testing is currently only available at MVH for a limited subset of ED/Inpatients as a diagnostic aide.

#### Q. Is patient information included when reporting testing numbers to the state?

A. Patient information including name, address, contact information, and other identifying information are not reported with testing numbers to the state.

**Q. How is care for patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 provided at MVH?**

A. For patients who have symptoms of COVID infection (new fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose/nasal congestion, shortness of breath, muscle aches or inability to smell or taste), please contact your MVH provider who can discuss COVID testing and care.

For patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 admitted to the hospital, care is provided with appropriate infection control policies. In the outpatient setting, patients with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 may be seen in other areas that have been established with the same infection control policies in place. Staff in these care areas have access to personal protective equipment (PPE), including N95 respirators, gowns, gloves and eye protection. Staff receive specialized training in the use of PPE to keep our patients, visitors and staff safe.

## General

**Q. Should I delay seeking care?**

A. No. Please call your doctor's office. We understand your concerns about seeking care now, and we want to assure you that we are here for you at MVH. Your safety is our priority. In many cases, if you delay your health care, your condition could worsen or you may need more serious treatments or procedures.

Medical emergencies are the same as before the COVID-19 pandemic. If you have an emergency, you should come to the MVH Emergency Department.

**Q. Can MVH patients have visitors?**

A. As of Monday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, the MVH visitor policy has been revised. We appreciate your help and understanding of the following guidelines which have been implemented to continue to keep you, our patients, and our staff safe during the ongoing COVID pandemic.

- Patients who are not on enhanced respiratory precautions may have one asymptomatic (no COVID-19 symptoms) visitor over the age of 18 in the hospital at a time. Patients at the end of life may have up to two visitors.
- Patients who are on enhanced respiratory precautions are not allowed to have a visitor. There are some exceptions for Obstetric and Pediatric patients, patients with a disability, and patients who are at the end of life.
- A child under the age of 18 may accompany an adult visitor to visit a patient who is a parent.
- Patients should please limit their number of visitors to one per day.
- Visiting hours begin at 1 and end at 8 pm to promote rest and healing. Exceptions may be made based on individual patient and family situations.
- Limited visitors are allowed into the Emergency Department. Exceptions will be reviewed with you on arrival to the department.
- No visitors are allowed in our Ambulatory Practices and Perioperative Areas. Some very limited exceptions will be reviewed with you at the time of scheduling if needed.
- If you are waiting to visit or escort a patient, please wait outside the hospital as visitor waiting areas remain closed.

**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.

## Appointments at MVH

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

A. MVH is rescheduling appointments as *virtual visits* on a case-by-case basis. Patients will be notified of any changes to their upcoming appointment(s) via Patient Gateway and/or by phone.

**Q. I am unsure if I should go to my appointment in-person or online. How should I decide?**

A. Call your provider's office and they will help you determine what is best for your individual circumstances. While online virtual visits are recommended in many cases, we will take into consideration both your health needs and your ability to safely visit MVH.

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

A. All surgeries with the exception of cosmetic surgeries are being scheduled on a case-by-case basis. Patients will be contacted with information regarding their surgery. If you have any questions, please contact

**Q: I'm currently planning to give birth at my local hospital off-island. Can I transfer my obstetrical care to MVH?**

A: In order to ensure the safety of moms and babies already in our delivery queue, MVH OB/Gyn services is not accepting transfer of care requests to avoid overwhelming our resources and potentially compromising care. The service is available to provide acute care needs to all women through MVH Emergency Department. Learn more [here](#).

**Q. Can a friend or family member accompany me to my appointment?**

A. No visitors are permitted in our Ambulatory Practices and Perioperative Areas with very limited exceptions (i.e. Pediatric and Obstetric patients, patients with a disability, and patients who are at the end of life), to ensure everyone's safety during COVID-19. As the situation evolves, we expect this policy to change according to Massachusetts State guidelines. While we understand this is difficult, it is based on public health recommendations.

It is possible to engage a family member or friend in a visit via FaceTime, Zoom or speaker phone during your visit to help with questions and listen to the care team's guidance for you. If this is of interest, ask your care team to assist you.

## Procedures when Visiting MVH

**Q. Will I be screened for symptoms of possible COVID-19 before I am allowed into the hospital?**

A. Yes. As part of our [Safe Care Commitment](#), Martha's Vineyard Hospital is screening all patients and visitors on arrival for symptoms to protect them, their families and our staff, before they are welcomed into the hospital.

Admitted patients are tested for COVID-19 prior to admission and screened for symptoms daily.

Outpatients are screened prior to and upon arrival, and if symptomatic, are cared for via virtual visits or evaluated in person following hospital infection control policies.

**Q. What happens when I arrive at MVH for an appointment?**

A. You will be greeted by an MVH employee who will provide you with hand sanitizer and a mask and will direct you to your appointment location. You may be asked multiple times about any symptoms you may have—please be patient. It is for your safety.

**Q. How safe will it be to visit my doctor/go for a procedure or appointment at MVH?**

A. Your safety has always been our top priority. During COVID-19, we have implemented [unprecedented safety measures](#) to keep you safe.

**Q. How are you ensuring patients stay more than six feet away from each other?**

A. We have observed that our patients already are doing a good job of physical distancing. In addition, waiting rooms have been re-organized with many fewer chairs and the floors in front of check-in desks have been marked with tape at six-foot intervals. The current universal mask policy adds another layer of protection; however, the expectation is that physical distance will be maintained through the use of scheduling and physical design of our spaces.

**Q: Do I have to wear a mask in MVH?**

A: Beginning Monday, April 6, all patients and visitors in any clinical setting will be supplied with a procedural or surgical mask, which must be worn as part of our continued efforts to protect our health care workers, our patients and to combat any additional community spread.

**Q: How do I enter MVH?**

A: There are two main entrances for patients: One for the Emergency Department and one for lab, radiology, and scheduled appointments. Please refer to the map below for information on specific department entrances. Each of the entrances will have an accompanying sign- color-coded and numbered- as depicted below.

