

Update: April 20, 2020

Stowe Personalized Medical Care

COVID-19 Update for Patients of Stowe Personalized Medical Care from Dr. Bisbee

Bending the Curve in Vermont: On April 14, there were 679 positive COVID 19 tests and 24 deaths in Vermont. As of April 20, there have been 812 COVID cases, 38 deaths in Vermont. In Lamoille County, there have been 23 cases and 2 deaths to date. In the US there have been 759,786 cases and 40,683 deaths.

Vermont is a model of success so far and we are definitely flattening the curve. Schools will remain closed for this school year. Governor Scott has extended the stay at home order until May 15, 2020 but he gave some direction to loosen restrictions last week. We are headed in the right direction. Don't let up too quickly.

General recommendations: Patients should stay at home as much as possible except to go to a grocery store or pharmacy. Buy 1-2 weeks of groceries. A cloth mask is recommended when you are near other people (6 feet safety zone). You do not need to wear a mask when you are by yourself, in your car or outside walking by yourself but have a mask handy if you are potentially coming within 6 feet of others. Wash hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Avoid touching your face, your eyes or nose with unwashed hands or gloves. Avoid contact with people that are sick. Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces using regular household cleaning spray or Lysol or Clorox wipes.

Symptoms to watch for: Patients with confirmed COVID-19 infection have reported mild-to-severe respiratory symptoms (fever, cough and sore throat). Other symptoms may include fatigue, weakness, lethargy and headache. Diarrhea and gastro-intestinal symptoms can also be possible symptoms. Call Dr. Bisbee to discuss your symptoms. Do not go to the hospital or emergency room before you call Dr. Bisbee.

Office Hours: The office is open 9:00 to 5:00 Monday through Friday. Dr. Bisbee is available to help you if you need medical care. We can set up a video conference, phone conference or office visit for you. The office door is locked and you should call ahead as many things can be taken care of by telephone. If we do arrange an office visit for you, we will call you ahead of time to make sure you are not sick. Dr. Bisbee and staff wear masks and take appropriate precautions.

We have been calling each patient to check on how they are doing and to ask what their individual health concerns are. Well visits, such as follow-up for hypertension and diabetes, physicals, and other **routine appointments can be set up** now because we are using in-office precautions. Call the office at 802-253-5020 or call Dr. Bisbee's cell phone after hours for emergent issues.

House calls: Dr. Bisbee will do house calls when necessary. If the patient is suspected of having Corona virus, Dr. Bisbee will wear full personal protective equipment (PPE). Dr. Bisbee will call ahead to make sure he has what he needs to do your house call.

Who should go to the Emergency Room? If you have a life-threatening medical issue such as a heart attack or stroke, call 911 without delay. Do not go to the hospital if you have respiratory illness, cough, fever, or sore throat without calling Dr. Bisbee first. Patients in Lamoille County without a PCP can call Copley Hospital (802-888-8642) to discuss their individual situation.

Testing for Corona Virus: Testing for Corona virus is available when it is medically appropriate. Call Dr. Bisbee to discuss your individual situation. Do not go to the hospital to get tested without calling Dr. Bisbee. We will make arrangements for you if medically indicated.

What Healthcare appointments should I cancel: Routine appointments with specialists are now being done by video conference. You should cancel routine dental appointments. You may need to see a dentist if you have a dental emergency. Postpone physical therapy, massage therapy, acupuncture and all non-essential appointments. You probably should cancel routine chiropractor appointments.

Basic recommendations:

1. Shop when there are fewer people at the grocery store.
2. Buy enough groceries for 2 weeks so you can avoid multiple trips.
3. Wear mask and gloves when you may potentially be within 6 feet of others.
4. Don't handle food and packages, look at it and only pick it up if you are going to buy it.
5. Be kind to others and only buy what you need so others can get what they need.
7. Don't bring your own shopping bags into the store.
8. Wash hands as soon as you arrive back into your home.

What activities can I do? Walking outside is an example of a safe activity when done by yourself or with household contacts. Being out in fresh air is a good thing. Always stay more than 6 feet away from other people you meet out on your walk. Be prepared to put on a mask when you may be getting within the social distance zone.

After hours: All Stowe Personalized Medical Care patients have Dr. Bisbee's personal cell phone and email and they can text or call him anytime they have an urgent medical problem.

Community helpers: Check out the **Stowe Outreach COVID 19 Team** call Leslie Anderson 802-253-8547 ext. 16 for the Stowe area. Take a look at **Hyde Park Helpers of Vermont-Mutual Aid** and **Helping Hands of Lamoille County** on Facebook. Please feel free to let me know about other connections so I can include them in this newsletter.