

Update: May 5, 2020

Stowe Personalized Medical Care

May 5, 2020 Update for Patients of Stowe Personalized Medical Care from Dr. Bisbee

Is it time to relax? On April 20, there were 812 COVID positive cases and 38 deaths in Vermont. On May 3, there were 897 positive COVID 19 cases and 52 deaths in Vermont. In the US there have been over a million positive cases and 68,678 deaths. It is projected that there will be over 130,000 deaths in the U.S by August.

Vermont is definitely flattening the curve but it is far from over. 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.

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. Well visits, such as follow-up for hypertension and diabetes, physicals, and other **routine appointments can be scheduled** because we are using in-office precautions.

Office visit, the new normal: We are seeing patients in the office by appointment. Appointments are made for 1 hour each so that there is no overlap of patients in the office. The office door is locked so we can control patient traffic. Before your appointment we will call to make sure that you do not have sore throat, cough, fever or any "flu-type" symptoms. **Patients are required to wear a cloth mask while in the office.** If you do not have a mask we will supply one for you at the door. **Patient's family and/or companions/driver are not allowed in the office with the patient at the time of their visit.** Exceptions will be for one parent of a dependent patient under 18 years old. Patients do not sit in our waiting room. You are taken directly back to the exam room. We encourage patients to wash their hands before and after the visit. We disinfect after each patient visit. We always consider alternative care delivery model such as Telemedicine, face time, phone virtual visits or house calls when appropriate.

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 come into your home.

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 COVID 19 symptoms. Call to discuss your symptoms.

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 Telehealth (video). You should cancel routine dental appointments unless it is an emergency. You may need to see a dentist if you have a dental emergency. Physical Therapy appointments can be done using telehealth visit technology. You should cancel routine chiropractor appointments unless you wear a mask and your chiropractor is following Health Department recommendations.

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 the 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 let me know about other connections so I can include them in this newsletter. You can help by sewing masks. Our office hands them out to patients coming in who don't have one. Think of ways to pay it forward and help others.