

Know When to Go

The novel coronavirus, COVID-19, is here right in the middle of flu season. To make sure you receive timely and appropriate care, it's important to know when to go to the emergency department.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is allowing anyone to get tested for COVID-19 with a physician's referral. However, it will take time for the health care system to ramp up its testing capabilities and locations. Tests should be reserved for those who meet the criteria for COVID-19 risk.

Visit www.emergencyphysicians.org/COVID19 for more patient information.

What should you do if you think you are sick with COVID-19?

1. Consider your symptoms.

Call your doctor if you've been in contact with someone who already has COVID-19 or has traveled to an affected region and with 14 days you develop the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Coughing
- Shortness of Breath
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Diarrhea
- Muscle/Body Aches
- Sore Throat
- Nausea/Vomiting
- New Loss of Taste/Smell
- Congestion/Stuffiness

Emergency departments do not have a cure for COVID-19. If you are experiencing fever that responds to acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen and a cough, and you are young and otherwise healthy, treat yourself as you would for a bad cold or flu. If you have shortness of breath that is new for you, call your doctor.

2. If your symptoms are mild, contact your **primary care physician** to discuss your best options for care. While you do not need to call ahead for the emergency department, it is important to **know when to go**.

3. Call 911 or visit your closest emergency department if:

- You're experiencing a medical emergency,
- You're sick enough that you need to go to the hospital, especially if you recently started experiencing shortness of breath, or
- You're sick and you are a high-risk individual, such as an older patient or a person with an already weakened immune system.