

LATEST NEWS FROM LIGHTHOUSE PEDIATRICS IN THE ERA OF COVID-19

Welcome to the latest installment of the Lighthouse Pediatrics Special Edition COVID Newsletter. If you've been following the news, you'll know that there have been an increasing number of people testing positive for COVID-19 and the average age of people diagnosed has decreased to now 37 years-old in Collier County. In other words, there are more young people getting COVID-19. There is debate in the news in regards to whether this is due to an increased number of tests, but some experts believe this is due to younger people not practicing social distancing. With the increased number of positive tests, we are receiving many calls and we will attempt to address the most frequent concerns/questions here.

What's happening at the office? Yes, we are:

- wearing all the gear – masks, goggles, gloves for all patient encounters.
- screening all of our patients for COVID symptoms when making the appointment and at arrival
- keeping the waiting rooms closed – parents text us when arriving at the office
- scheduling checkups and getting your children ready for school and sports.
- only seeing sick patients after we have seen our well patients for the day.
- having sick patients use a separate entrance and check-in/checkout area.

A few things we ask of you:

- Please be flexible with your availability for appointment times
- Please come to the office on time – the above precautions take time
- Please let us know if you cannot wait in your car – your safety and comfort is very important to us and we don't want you in a car with a broken A/C!

Who should get tested? Or, our most frequent phone call - "A household member has been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and I want everyone in my

house tested." There are multiple factors in determining whether a child should get a test and we are using the CDC guidelines. Most people will have mild illness and can recover at home and **may not need to be tested.**

Who may need to be tested:

- Children with symptoms consistent with COVID-19. Symptoms can include: fever without another explanation, cough, congestion, headache, sore throat, chills
- Children who have been in CLOSE contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 –
- Close contact - lives in the same house as the child **OR** spent more than 15 minutes less than 6 ft apart 2 days or less before the person had the test
- Infants born to a mother with COVID-19 should be tested immediately after birth
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/if-you-are-sick/317422->
- Children who are undergoing an elective surgery – the surgeon will order the test

If a child comes into close contact with someone who has COVID-19, then they should be **quarantined** – kept at home for 14 days and observed for symptoms.

A note about testing: we have very limited supplies and staffing to do widespread testing at the office. NCH is currently "winding down" their drive-through testing. We know you are nervous when you hear about someone testing positive, but we are really striving to follow the criteria above. We currently do not offer the rapid test in our office. We are looking into available options for testing, so stay tuned.

My child tested positive for COVID-19 – now what? If your child has symptoms of fever and cough, treat the fever and give comfort care. Most children with COVID-19 do just fine and have very mild symptoms and do NOT need to go to the hospital. You would watch your child for difficulty breathing or a sudden change in behavior or energy level. As stated in our earlier newsletter, the Multisystem Inflammatory Condition is very rare, but contact us if you are concerned about a change for the worse.

If your child tests positive, then she or he should be **isolated** - kept apart in a separate room from other household members in order to minimize the spread to others.

Here's a link to great information on isolation vs. quarantine:

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/if-you-are-sick/317422-A_Quarantine-and-Isolation_508.pdf

If your child or you test positive for COVID-19, you will be contacted by someone from the health department to conduct "contact tracing."

http://ww11.doh.state.fl.us/comm/partners/action/contact_tracing_can_contain_covid19.pdf

How long should my child be isolated? For children who test positive AND have symptoms, you would want to keep him or her isolated until:

- at least 3 days have passed since the last fever **AND**
- there is no cough or shortness of breath **AND**
- at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

If there were NO symptoms, then you would want to keep the child isolated for 10 days from the time the test was done. There is still some uncertainty on how long someone can shed the virus if they have no symptoms.

Should we be wearing masks? There will be a new guideline coming from the CDC very soon. We are recommending children OVER 2 years old wear masks when they will be in a public setting where social distancing is difficult (specifically retail stores and grocery stores.) We kindly request you wear a mask when you come to the office, but do not require it.

We are continuing to pray for the safety and well-being for our patients. Please let us know if you need anything. Don't forget about our Swap Shop if you need any children's clothing or infant items and there are numerous community resources we are happy to direct you to depending on your need.