COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the name of the infection caused by the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. Coronavirus causes illnesses that affect your lungs making it hard to breathe. Some of these viruses spread easily from person to person.

How is COVID-19 Spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets in the air produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly inhaled (breathed) into the lungs.

The virus is more likely to spread when people are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).

What are the Symptoms of COVID-19?

Current symptoms reported for people with COVID-19 have included:

- fever
- cough
- trouble breathing or shortness of breath
- other symptoms include muscle aches, headache, sore throat, diarrhea, or loss of taste or smell.

Symptoms range from mild to severe.

Is There a Test for COVID-19?

A viral test is used to tell if you have a current COVID-19 infection. The test is usually done by inserting a swab into the nose.

The swab may be uncomfortable. It can cause coughing and watery eyes.

Can COVID-19 be Treated?

There is no widely available treatment at this time. Several medicines are being tested to see if they may help treat COVID-19 infections.

Is There a Vaccine?

Vaccines are widely available. Contact your primary care provider, pharmacy, clinic or local public health department to schedule an appointment.

What is Allina Health Doing to Prevent COVID-19 Infection?

Hospitals, clinics and other health care facilities have taken many steps to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infections spread among health care workers and patients.

- Health care workers caring for patients with COVID-19 will wear personal protective equipment such as gowns, gloves, eye protection and masks or respirators.
- All staff at Allina Health hospitals and clinics are asked to wear a mask, even when they are not caring for patients.

- All patients and visitors are asked to wear masks when in the hospital or clinic, even if they do not feel sick.

  Wearing masks helps to prevent COVID-19 from spreading from person to person. Someone can be infected COVID-19 and not have symptoms.

Are Visitors Allowed in the Hospital?

- The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and Minnesota and Wisconsin health departments made changes to masking and social distancing guidelines.

  These changes don't apply to health care settings. You are still asked to wear a mask to enter Allina Health facilities.

- Visitors need to wear a mask the entire time they are in the building. They will need to complete a screening process before visiting their loved one or friend.

- Visitor restrictions will change as the pandemic changes. Visitors should check with the hospital's website or call before visiting.

- Visitors should ask the nursing staff about the visitor policy or any other site-specific guidelines if their loved one or friend has or may have COVID-19.

- For their safety, visitors will be asked to step out of the room if their loved one or friend is receiving respiratory (breathing) treatment.

Ask a member of your loved one's or friend's health care team if you have any questions about reducing your risk from the virus.

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