

Pediatric Alternatives Coronavirus Update.

First of all, take a breath, relax and don't panic. From all accounts Coronavirus is a mild respiratory illness for most people but especially children, adolescents and healthy adults. Adverse outcomes are mostly seen in the elderly and those with chronic medical conditions. Children seem to be doing very well with the virus with no fatalities in children <10, even in newborns. And complications were second lowest in the group of kids 10-19, which is very encouraging.

At Pediatric Alternatives we are taking steps to keep children with respiratory illness and/or fever out of the office. We are happy to talk to you via telemedicine to help determine if your child needs to be assessed in the office or needs to be tested for Coronavirus. If your child has a fever and/or respiratory illness and you want an office visit, we will ask you to wait in the garden until we have determined whether it's possible or likely that you have Coronavirus before we take you into an exam room.

If you have a reason to believe that you were exposed (e.g. someone close to you has returned from an area with Coronavirus activity and now has a fever >100.3 and cough) call us and we can determine if you need to be tested. Testing right now is only available through the public health department with CDC approval on a VERY limited basis.

Regarding prevention:

1. Take the usual measures to help prevent illness during the cold and flu season. Proper diet, sleep and a balanced lifestyle are still important. Wash hands - a lot. Stay home if you are sick. Minimize contact with others if you do get sick. We cannot emphasize this enough.
2. If you have any chronic health issues you haven't addressed, address them now, before the virus is widespread. Quit smoking or vaping, limit your intake of sugar and alcohol to get your blood sugar under control. Follow your doctor's advice concerning your asthma and allergy protocols.
3. Pay attention to the CDC travel advisories, and maybe even take it a step further. No non essential travel to Asia, also to other areas hardest hit like Iran, Italy and Japan. Some doctors are recommending stopping all non-essential travel, even within the U.S., but we are not recommending that at this time.

4. Treatment - Other than the usual supportive measures for any virus, there is no specific treatment for Coronavirus. However, early data says immunosuppressive treatments, like high dose steroids, are a bad idea. We suggest that you take it a step further and learn from the impact of aspirin on the Spanish Flu in 1917-1918 and consider not using aspirin/ibuprofen/acetaminophen routinely to suppress symptoms if someone in your family does get COVID-19. This recommendation is based only on limited evidence available from other outbreaks and may change as we get current scientific information.

Some measures to consider: having Vitamin C powder for high dose use and perhaps herbal antivirals such as V-clear (a preparation of Pelargonium which has proven efficacy against cold viruses) at home on hand to start at the onset of illness. There will be medications that will have activity against COVID-19 but these are currently being tested for efficacy and safety and will only be used in worst case scenarios. Hopefully soon we'll know more about what medications will work as trials are beginning on anti-virals. Right now there is not a medication we can prescribe for you "Just to be safe".

For ourselves and our families, we are not doing anything differently right now, except minimizing exposure to those returning from travel to high risk areas, extra good hand washing and taking Vitamin C.

Like many outbreaks that lessen in severity as they spread, we can hope that it will be weaker by the time it spreads more widely and that more information will be available about the best ways to treat

Lastly, our friend and colleague Dr. Elisa Song wrote an excellent, well researched article that we are sharing with you. She outlines what is currently known about Coronavirus and has some excellent recommendations. [link to Dr. Song's blog](#)

We will keep you informed as more information becomes available.

**The Best to All and Happy Spring,
The Doctors of Pediatric Alternatives**