



May 6: Rescheduling Appointments, Surgeries and Procedures

This weekly communication is intended to facilitate the sharing of important clinical information during our Reactivation phase of the COVID-19 healthcare crisis and to help respond to questions from physicians across Northwestern Medicine.

Similar to our COVID-19 surge preparations, a collaborative and coordinated effort is underway to implement policies and processes that will allow for the safe return of non-COVID-19 patients to our hospitals and outpatient clinics. Over the next few months, we will closely monitor hospital and clinic capacity across the health system to ensure our facilities are prepared, including open beds and exam rooms, staffing levels, supply availability, and testing capacity.

As the environment changes, we will continue to communicate important updates here in our new **Reactivation Update** newsletter, as well as on the new **Reactivation Resources** pages on **NMI** and **Physician Forum**. *Reactivation Update* will be distributed each Wednesday to all NM physicians.

RESCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS, SURGERIES AND PROCEDURES

The Illinois Department of Public Health indicates that elective surgeries and procedures can resume May 11. We have begun to thoughtfully plan for how we will ramp up our facilities and services to provide this care, including reserving the required capacity for a potential resurge in patients testing positive for SARS-CoV-2.

Our ambulatory clinics have expanded access to e-visits and telehealth, and in-office visits remain available. This week, we will begin scheduling previously postponed and clinically necessary appointments, surgeries and procedures. We have established best practices for maintaining a safe and trusted environment for our clinicians, staff and patients, and we have developed a number of resources to help guide you through these changes and assist with patient scheduling:

- **Surgery/Procedural Reactivation Playbook**
- **Ambulatory Reactivation Playbook - Plans for Safety and Operations**
- **Outpatient Diagnostic Reactivation Playbook - Plans for Safety and Operations**
- **Telehealth Reactivation Playbook**
- **CDC Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes**

These resources and others are available on the **Reactivation Resources** pages on **NMI** and **Physician Forum**.

PATIENT COMMUNICATIONS

Our latest research shows that patients view physician contact as a strong influence on their willingness to seek medical care during the COVID-19 pandemic. As we begin to reschedule patient appointments, surgeries and procedures, it's important to continue to communicate with patients, sharing the steps we've taken to create this trusted environment.

To assist you in these conversations, we have developed the following resources:

- **Physician Talking Points**
- **Patient Letter**
- **Patient Safety During COVID-19**

Please remember, if members of the media reach out to you for comment or an interview, per **NM's Media Relations Policy**, please refer them to Media Relations at 312.926.7432.

Thank you for your continued partnership and leadership during this unprecedented time. If you have questions or would like to share the story of an NM hero, please email us at **covid-19md@nm.org**.



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