

THIS EMAIL IS BEING SENT TO ALL NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE PHYSICIANS, APPS AND SENIOR LEADERS



November 10: Surge Planning, and Holiday Travel and Safety

Today's issue includes information about surge planning, and holiday travel and safety recommendations. It also includes a link to the October 29 Clinical Insights Panel, which is now available online for CME credit.

HEALTH SYSTEM SURGE PLANNING

As we enter flu season and the number of patients with COVID-19 continues to increase across Chicago and the state, we have reactivated many of our response activities in accordance with regulatory guidance and lessons learned. We also have enhanced many of our protocols to address both SARS-CoV-2 and flu-related testing and treatment.

Across Northwestern Medicine, we are following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Illinois Department of Public Health regarding surge preparations and anticipated patient volumes, and are carefully monitoring both ICU and medical bed capacity at all hospitals. We are confident in our readiness to safely and efficiently convert patient care units as needed to treat patients diagnosed with COVID-19.

We continue to assess personal protective equipment (PPE) and have ample quantities of PPE to ensure a safe and trusted environment for our patients and caregivers. We are also enhancing PPE guidelines, exceeding national guidelines, to reduce the risk of exposure for all healthcare workers.

We will continue to adhere to state guidelines and to communicate all safety precautions and updates regarding testing and treatment protocols in a clear and timely manner. Please remember to frequently check the [COVID-19 page on Physician Forum](#), as well as the [COVID-19 page on NM Interactive](#), for the latest guidelines, recommendations and protocols.

HOLIDAY TRAVEL AND SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

As COVID-19 cases increase across the country, it's important that we focus on ways to keep our patients, our colleagues, ourselves and our family safe as we celebrate the Thanksgiving holiday. NM physicians and employees are strongly encouraged to postpone personal travel — even over the holidays — to states identified on the [City of Chicago Travel Quarantine List](#).

However, we recognize some will choose to travel to these states. For those who live or work in Chicago, the City of Chicago requires a 14-day self-quarantine if you travel to any state on the [Travel Quarantine List](#). Alternatively, essential workers can be tested for SARS-CoV-2 between

day 5 and 7 after returning from a state on the quarantine list, and if negative, they may return to work on day 8. If your planned travel will cause you to self-quarantine when you return, please remember to notify colleagues as appropriate to allow sufficient time to adjust schedules to meet quarantine requirements. Click [here](#) for more information about the quarantine period.

If you are hosting extended family for the holidays, we recommend that you wear masks and physically distance by at least 6 feet as much as possible.

To help you remain healthy in the coming months, please plan to get a flu vaccine if you have not done so already. Additionally, continue efforts to physically distance, especially when eating and unable to wear a mask. We know the most effective tools to mitigate the spread of SARS-CoV-2 remain the following personal safety protocols:

- Wear a mask at all gatherings that include people outside of your regular household.
- Maintain at least 6 feet of physical distance whenever possible, especially when eating.
- Wash your hands frequently.

CLINICAL INSIGHTS PANEL: TREATMENT UPDATES AND VACCINE DEVELOPMENT

If you missed the October 29 COVID-19 Clinical Insights Panel on treatment updates and vaccine development, you can now view the session in its entirety, for CME credit, on the Northwestern University Continuing Medical Education website. To access the course, simply click the link:

[Clinical Insights Panel: COVID-19 Treatment Updates & Vaccine Development](#)

We recognize that everyone is being asked to make sacrifices to remain safe during the pandemic. We are grateful for your dedication and steadfast commitment to ensuring the safety of your colleagues, our patients and visitors.



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