

Patient FAQs

SAFETY MEASURES + PRECAUTIONS

What precautions is Chester County Hospital (CCH) and its Ambulatory facilities taking to make sure the environment is safe for me?

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic came to our region, CCH had been working and planning to ensure the safety of our patients, their families, and our staff. Now, as we work to implement plans to resume some procedures and surgeries which were deferred in March and April to protect patients, and shift appointments back to our facilities that had been conducted virtually, we are focused on continuing our rigorous safety procedures, which have included:

- Screening, including thermal scanning, of all patients, visitors (healthy support person/s) and staff for symptoms every day. Those with symptoms are referred for testing. Patients with symptoms who are coming for an appointment will have their appointments rescheduled.
- Convening a committee purely focused on social distancing to ensure we consider multiple ways to keep patients, visitors, and staff safe.
- Enacting a universal masking policy which requires all staff, patients, and visitors to wear masks or face coverings at all times. CCH will provide a mask to visitors/patients that do not have a mask upon entering the building.
- Testing each patient for COVID-19 24-48 hours prior to admission for procedures. If a patient tests positive, a decision will be made between the patient and his or her surgeon regarding the safety of delaying the procedure.
- Discontinuing the availability of magazines in waiting areas for your protection.
- Configuring all waiting areas to promote physical distancing including surgical waiting areas as well as pre- and post-operative areas.

What cleaning measures is CCH taking to keep patients safe?

- Waiting areas/sitting areas are cleaned several times a day, in accordance with Infection Control guidelines.
- CCH has increased the frequency of times that “high touch” surfaces are cleaned. Examples include special attention to table tops, elevator buttons, stairwell handrails, door knobs, keyboards, public washrooms, armrests.
- We have ensured that hand sanitizer is available to staff, patients and visitors, throughout the hospital.
- All isolation rooms, upon a patient’s discharge, are cleaned from top to bottom before another patient is admitted. This includes using UV light on the closed room, after the top to bottom cleaning.
- The Environmental Services Department (EVS) increased the number of its staff to support the Emergency Department (*this staffing change pre-dated COVID*).
- The EVS staff are available to promptly clean the ED bays, once the patient is discharged, or transferred, in accordance with Infection Control guidelines.

What precautions should I take when I come in for an appointment or surgery?

- 24 hours prior to your appointment, you will receive an automated text or call that is designed to screen patients for COVID-19 symptoms. Please respond to the text or answer that call. If you have any symptoms that could be consistent with COVID-19 (these include fevers, chills, cough, loss of sense of taste or smell, muscle pain, headache, or sore throat), you will receive a call back from a nurse. He or she will review your symptoms with you and determine if you need a COVID-19 test, a telemedicine visit, or if you should reschedule your appointment or surgery.
- Wear a face covering or mask to your visit, procedure or surgery.

Do CCH staff and physicians have the personal protective equipment (PPE) they need to keep me safe?

Yes, we have sufficient PPE to ensure that you, your visitors, and our staff are safe. All staff wear the necessary protective equipment required for their role. There is a committee at Chester County Hospital that meets frequently to assess our supply levels to ensure we are fully prepared to care for our patients’ safety.

What is CCH doing to make sure I don’t come in contact with someone who has COVID-19?

- We are testing symptomatic patients and employees for COVID-19.
- We are testing patients for COVID-19 prior to surgery and procedures requiring general anesthesia or intubation or that are deemed high risk.
- All waiting areas as well as pre- and post-operative areas, have been configured to promote physical distancing.
- We are caring for patients in a specific COVID unit in our hospital that is separate from other patient care areas, in order to optimize our infection control practices and protect patients and staff.

Is it safe to come to the Emergency Department (ED)?

Yes—wait times are minimal and CCH has created geographically distinct emergency rooms where we are able to re-stratify our COVID patients in one area/section of the ED and our non-COVID patients in a separate area. It is important for patients that have active symptoms (chest pain, pressure) come directly to the emergency room and do not present late for a complicated course of care.

Is there a difference at different locations?

No. All of our hospitals and ambulatory practices are taking the same precautions to prevent exposure to COVID-19.

What will it be like in the waiting room? Will you limit the number of people? Will people be required to wear face coverings?

- Everyone is required to wear a face covering or mask. If a patient or support person does not have one, we will provide one. You should not wear a mask with a valve. It protects you but does not protect others.
- We enforce physical distancing and our waiting rooms have been reconfigured to only allow a limited number of people at one time.
- CCH incorporates contactless check-in and check-out registration procedures through myPennMedicine, our patient portal. To reduce physical contact and save time when coming in for your visit/procedure, we're giving patients who have a myPennMedicine account the ability to complete part of your health care paperwork ahead of time. On myPennMedicine, you can confirm or change your contact information, medications, allergies and current health issues before your visit. Just sign in to myPennMedicine, find your appointment in your To Do list, and select the Pre Check-In button.

How do I enroll in myPennMedicine?

myPennMedicine is a simple, secure way to manage your Penn Medicine health care and access your medical information from your personal computer or mobile device. To sign up, visit www.mypennmedicine.org

Where do I park when I come to the hospital? Is there valet parking?

Valet service is temporarily suspended at all Penn Medicine locations to limit COVID-19 exposure. At CCH, garage and outdoor parking, and drop-offs, are still available. We recommend you call the appropriate office if you have questions about parking, or visit Chester County Hospital's website, which has specific parking details.

TESTING

Will I be tested before my procedure/surgery? How does that process work? What happens if I test positive?

- All patients will be tested for COVID-19 24 – 48 hours before their procedure, If a patient tests positive, a decision will be made between you and your surgeon regarding the safety of delaying their procedure. In most cases if your procedure is not of an emergent nature, it will be delayed for a short period of time to make sure that you stay healthy. If you and your physician agree that your procedure should proceed as planned and is of an emergent nature, we have practices in place to safely perform procedures on patients with COVID-19. You may be asked to have a repeat COVID test in 1-2 weeks if you test positive and continue to have no symptoms, to re-evaluate the timing of your surgery.
- We will work with your physician/surgeon to schedule you for a test at the COVID-19 Testing Center at Chester County Hospital 48 hours before your scheduled procedure/test.
- If you test positive you will receive daily follow up calls from our medical team to review your symptoms and provide supportive care.
- For patients who return to the hospital on a regular basis, i.e. for radiation therapy, it would not be appropriate or reasonable to test before every visit.

VISITATION POLICIES

We understand the anxiety and concern associated with not being able to visit or accompany a loved one to an appointment. The guidelines for CCH's visitation policy have changed. Please visit Chestercountyhospital.org/visitor-guidelines for more information and the current visitation policy.