

# C NORTH OAKS Community

VOLUME 22 • NUMBER 3 • 2020

**SPECIAL COVID-19 EDITION**

## **COVID-19: How North Oaks Is Keeping You Safe in the New Normal**

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We hope you're healthy and doing well during this difficult and challenging time. We want you to know that North Oaks is here for you and we are taking extra precautions to keep you and our care team safe as we work closely with state and local officials to move to the new normal.

Thank you for practicing social distancing and helping Louisiana flatten the curve. Because of your hard work, the Louisiana Department of Health has allowed some loosening of the restrictions on providing care for you and your loved ones.

While monitoring state and federal guidelines, your health and safety remain our highest priority. As always, you can rest assured we're here for you and are committed to providing an exceptional health care experience.

### Services We Continue to Provide

In addition to 24/7 ER and Trauma services, we offer walk-in care for most non-COVID illnesses and minor injuries. Our walk-in clinics have not closed during this pandemic and remain open in Hammond, Ponchatoula and Walker. Available services also include some procedures, surgeries and labs. If you are curious about whether or not your condition qualifies for any of these services, call your health care provider.

Remember that in an emergency, every minute matters. Call 911 or visit the ER. Please don't suffer at home during this crisis. We are keeping ER patients with COVID-like symptoms separate, isolating them from everyone else and performing intense cleaning to ensure everyone's safety.

### How We Are Keeping You Safe

With the exception of emergency room and walk-in clinic visits, health care services will be provided by appointment only to control the number of people in public spaces at one time. And when medically appropriate, doctors with North Oaks Physician Group may conduct visits with you via telemedicine.

When you visit a North Oaks facility, you will be required to wear a mask, and will be screened for fever upon arrival. Our entire team will also be wearing masks.

We have rearranged waiting areas and limited seating to ensure social distancing. At the present time, anyone accompanying you to your appointment will be asked to wait in the car to limit the number of people in our public spaces. Of course, patients in wheelchairs or needing help walking may be accompanied to the door and will be met by staff. And for the time-being, for the safety of everyone, patients who have been admitted to the hospital are still not allowed to have visitors.

Infection prevention is always a high priority at North Oaks, and is especially important during a pandemic. We have a team of nurses specially trained to help reduce patient infections in hospitals and to help prevent the spread of communicable diseases. They have been instrumental in ensuring our staff is protecting themselves and our patients with the appropriate use and disposal of personal protective

equipment, also known as PPE. We have a robot called Tru-D that uses ultra-violet rays to thoroughly disinfect all surfaces, nooks and crannies in a room that was used by a patient with an infectious disease.

Finally, the North Oaks family thanks you for your support of our front-line workers during this emergency. Words cannot express our gratitude. We will get through this together. As we recover, please know that we're here for you, improving lives, every time and with every touch.

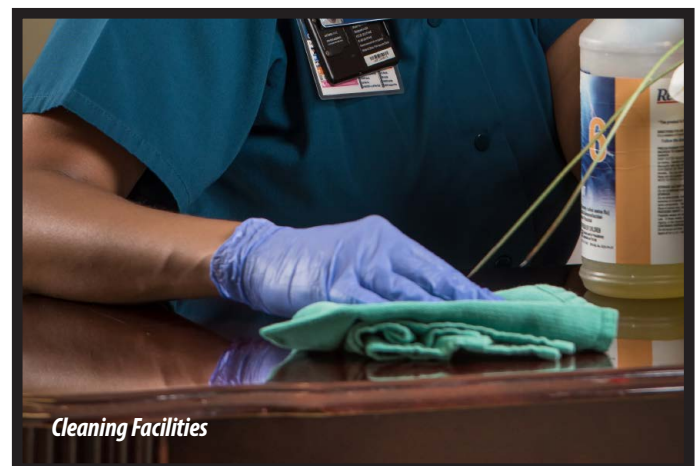
Michele K. Sutton, FACHE



Temperature Screenings



Tru-D Disinfecting



Cleaning Facilities



# WEAR A MASK WHILE SOCIAL DISTANCING

Wearing a mask or face covering is an act of kindness and courtesy, just like social distancing. When health and public officials ask you to wear a mask in indoor spaces and anytime when you are near others who are not in your immediate household, it's important to shield against germs. When you wear a mask, you protect others. When they wear masks, they protect you.

## How to wear face masks



- Masks should fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face.
- Masks should be secured with ties or ear loops.
- Masks should include multiple layers of fabric.
- Homemade masks made of cloth should be washed and machine dried without damage or change to shape.
- Wash your hands before applying.
- Cover both your nose and mouth with your mask.
- Try to avoid touching your mask.
- Completely remove your mask while eating.
- Cloth masks or face coverings should be washed and dried after each use. When your cloth mask is not in use, fold it with the side that goes toward your mouth folded into the inside. Store the mask in a resealable bag or clean storage container.
- Disposable masks should be thrown away when soiled and should never be used for multiple days.

Source: Louisiana Department of Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

## Clean Surfaces Daily

Cleaning and sanitizing surfaces in your home or business can help lower the chances you and others will contract COVID-19 and lower the chances it might spread to someone else.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention offer these tips:

- Determine what needs to be cleaned. Areas unoccupied for seven or more days need only routine cleaning.
- Clean visibly dirty surfaces with soap and water prior to disinfecting.
- Use household cleaners and disinfectants. Be sure to follow label instructions to ensure safe and efficient use of the disinfectant. Most EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.
- Clean and disinfect high-touch surface areas, including phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, keyboards, tablets and bedside tables.
- Continue routine cleaning and disinfection, and maintain safe practices such as frequent handwashing, using masks or face coverings, social distancing of six feet or more and staying home if you are sick.

Early research shows that the coronavirus' survival is dependent on the surface it lands on – which can be from three hours to seven days, depending on the material.

Source: World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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*CommUnity* is printed and published by North Oaks Health System with the leadership of the North Oaks Board of Commissioners.

The information in this newsletter is meant to complement the advice of your health care providers, not to replace it. Before making any major changes in your medications, diet or exercise, talk to your health care provider.

**The North Oaks Health System mission is to improve lives, every time and with every touch.**

    [www.northoaks.org](http://www.northoaks.org)



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### How can I grocery shop safely?

When grocery shopping, keep at least 6 feet from others and avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose. If possible, sanitize the handles of shopping trolleys or baskets before shopping. Once home, wash your hands thoroughly and after handling and storing your purchased products. There is currently no confirmed case of COVID-19 transmitted through food or food packaging.



### Can I catch COVID-19 from my pet?

Several dogs and cats in contact with infected humans have tested positive for COVID-19. There is no evidence that these animals can transmit the disease to humans and play a role in spreading COVID-19. COVID-19 is mainly spread through droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or speaks.



### Can children or adolescents get COVID-19?

Research indicates that children and adolescents are just as likely to become infected as any other age group and can spread the disease. Evidence suggests that children and young adults are less likely to get severe disease, but severe cases can still happen in these age groups. Children and adults should follow the same guidance on self-quarantine and self-isolation if there is a risk they have been exposed or are showing symptoms. It is particularly important that children avoid contact with older people and others who are at risk of more severe disease.



### What should I do if I have no symptoms, but I think I have been exposed to COVID-19? What does it mean to self-isolate?

Separate yourself from others because you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 even though you, yourself, do not have symptoms. The goal to self-isolate is to prevent transmission. Since people who become ill with COVID-19 can infect others immediately, self-isolation can prevent some infections from happening.



### What medications are effective in preventing or treating COVID-19?

COVID-19 is too new and research has not definitively identified one proven treatment. In general, antibiotics do not work against viruses; they only work on bacterial infections. Coronavirus disease is caused by a virus, not bacteria. Some patients with COVID-19 also may develop a bacterial infection, such as pneumonia. In that case, a health care professional may treat the bacterial infection with an antibiotic.

### For more answers to your questions, check out these resources:

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| North Oaks Health System                 | <a href="http://www.northoaks.org/coronavirus">www.northoaks.org/coronavirus</a> |
| North Oaks Screening Line                | (985) 230-2778   |
| Louisiana Department of Health           | <a href="http://www.lhdh.la.gov/coronavirus">www.lhdh.la.gov/coronavirus</a>     |
| Louisiana 211 Network                    | Dial 211   |
| Centers for Disease Control & Prevention | <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus">www.cdc.gov/coronavirus</a>             |
| World Health Organization                | <a href="http://www.who.it">www.who.it</a>                                       |
| U.S. Food & Drug Administration          | <a href="http://www.fda.gov">www.fda.gov</a>                                     |