The HCC & HCC Pharmacy are here for you and we’re strictly following protocols to ensure the safety of our staff and patients (both sick and well)

**Call the HCC before entering our facility if you are sick or have been exposed to COVID-19.**

Your Health Care Center is fully operational, here to help when you and your family members are sick and well. It’s never been more important for you to pay attention to your health.

**We know you have questions about the HCC & HCC Pharmacy during this time. Below you’ll find answers to the ones we’re hearing the most.**

- Are the HCC and the HCC Pharmacy open even though most SAS employees are working from home and North Carolina is under a ‘stay at home’ executive order?
- Could I be exposed to COVID-19 at the HCC?
- What steps has the HCC taken to protect staff and patients from COVID-19?
- Should I keep my scheduled appointment at the HCC?
- What about telehealth?
- What about the HCC Pharmacy?

Tell me more about Coronavirus (COVID-19) and what I should do if I'm sick or think I may have been exposed.

- If you're sick, DO NOT walk in. Call ahead before seeking care.
- Coronavirus symptoms (may appear 2-14 days after exposure)
- Will the HCC offer COVID-19 antibody testing?
Are the HCC and the HCC Pharmacy open even though most SAS employees are working from home and North Carolina is under a ‘stay at home’ executive order?

Health care is considered an essential service for which individuals are expected to leave their homes; health care workers are considered critical workers.

Because the HCC is the medical home for a majority of SAS employees and families, we must be here to provide our full range of comprehensive services:

- physical exams
- immunizations
- lab tests
- physical therapy
- prescription pick-up
- pharmacist consultation
- management of chronic diseases and
- treatment of acute illnesses.

Could I be exposed to COVID-19 at the HCC?

All patients with respiratory symptoms are first triaged by a nurse over the phone.

The HCC monitors national, state and local health authorities and follows their guidance for triaging, testing and self-quarantine.

Most patients with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 are otherwise healthy and do not need to be tested or come to the HCC (this is CDC guidance).

Patients who have underlying conditions that put them at risk of a more serious outcome, are seen at the HCC in special rooms for this purpose, never enter the HCC through the lobby and staff who take care of them wear the recommended personal protective equipment (PPE). Most of the few COVID-19 tests we’ve done have been performed while the patient sat in their car in the parking lot at the rear of the HCC.

What steps has the HCC taken to protect staff and patients from COVID-19?

We permit only patients scheduled for ‘well visits’ to wait in the HCC lobby. The large lobby space easily allows the recommended social distance of 6 feet. Our lobby wait time averages less than 5 minutes.

Patients for ‘sick visits’ of all kinds (not just respiratory) notify us by phone from their cars when they arrive at the HCC parking lot and wait in their cars until notified by us that they are ready to be checked in. They simply walk through the lobby directly to an exam room.
HCC staff do not come to work sick, wash their hands throughout the day with soap and water, wear recommended PPE when working with sick patients, clean all services after every patient encounter, are proven by testing to be immune to communicable diseases or are immunized and receive an annual flu vaccine.

**Should I keep my scheduled appointment at the HCC?**

Unless you have symptoms of COVID-19 and are self-quarantined, it’s important to keep your primary care appointments and to continue to take care of health conditions like diabetes, hypertension, thyroid disease, etc.

**What about telehealth?**

If you already have an HCC appointment scheduled, there is likely no need to cancel it. A phone visit could be a good substitute. HCC nurses are currently calling patients with upcoming appointments to discuss whether an onsite or phone visit is best for them. If this sounds good to you, take the initiative and call us to convert your onsite visit to a virtual one.

**What about the HCC Pharmacy?**

The HCC Pharmacy is fully operational and offers curbside delivery if you prefer not to come into their lobby.

The Pharmacy waives FedEx fees for mail order prescriptions—which makes this option cheaper for a 30-day supply of your medication than to have the prescription filled at a retail pharmacy near your home.

Remember that you can only get 90-day prescriptions filled at the HCC by pick-up or by mail order.

**Tell me more about Coronavirus (COVID-19) and what I should do if I'm sick or think I may have been exposed.**

If you're sick, DO NOT walk in. Call ahead before seeking care.

- You will be triaged on the phone by a nurse experienced with the latest health authorities’ guidelines.
- If you need to be seen at the HCC, you will be given special instructions regarding your arrival and appointment.
- We will prepare for your arrival so that we can provide you the best possible care while also protecting others.
- **Remember**: Not everyone needs to be tested. Unless you are in a high risk group (65 and older; an underlying health condition like chronic lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, asthma; or a depressed immune system), the CDC recommends that you self-quarantine at home.
Coronavirus symptoms (may appear 2-14 days after exposure)

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

If you develop any of these for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

Will the HCC offer COVID-19 antibody testing?

The HCC looks forward to offering valid reliable COVID-19 antibody testing once it’s been reviewed and approved by the FDA and when CDC issues guidance to health care providers for who to test, when to test, how to interpret test results, etc.

Several weeks ago the FDA waived all rules on antibody tests, allowing anyone to sell any product intended to test for COVID-19, and the FDA would figure out later if it’s accurate. Many test makers advertise they have an “approval for sale”—this is not actually FDA approval. It’s that the FDA is not requiring approval in order for the tests to be offered for sale.

All of the antibody tests on the market are required by the FDA to have the following warnings:

- This test has not been reviewed by the FDA.
- Negative results do not rule out COVID-19 infection, particularly in those who have been in contact with the virus. Follow-up testing with a molecular diagnostic should be considered to rule out infection in these individuals.
- Results from antibody testing should not be used as the sole basis to diagnose or exclude COVID-19 infection or to inform infection status.
- Positive results may be due to past or present infection with non-COVID-19 coronavirus strains, such as coronavirus HKU1, NL63, OC43, or 229E.

HCC providers will order and the HCC will perform COVID-19 antibody tests when they meet the same rigorous standards as all other diagnostic testing we do. We hope this time comes soon. Certainly a lot of work and research is being done to get the US and rest of the world to that point.

See Gale Adcock’s blog, A simple test? Not at all, for more information.
If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 or have symptoms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stay home except to get medical care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CDC: What to Do if You are Sick</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use the <strong>CDC’s Symptom Self Checker</strong> on this site to check your own symptoms and receive guidance on whether to stay home, isolate, get tested or seek medical care. It is not intended for the diagnosis or treatment of disease or other conditions, including COVID-19. For U.S. residents only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Stay home.</strong> Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Take care of yourself.</strong> Get rest and stay hydrated. Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better. Use a humidifier and take a hot shower to ease a sore throat or cough. Drink plenty of liquids and rest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Stay in touch with your healthcare provider.</strong> Call us before seeking medical care. Be sure to get care if you have trouble breathing, or have any other emergency warning signs, or if you think it is an emergency.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Separate yourself from other people</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Do not go to work or other public areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Try to keep yourself in a specific room in your home and stay away from people and pets in your home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels or bedding with other people in your home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use a separate bathroom if available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Wash anything you touch or use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If you have to be around others, wear a cloth face covering.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• If you cough or sneeze into your hands, wash them immediately with soap and water.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Throw away used tissues in a lined trash can.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Immediately wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If no soap and water are available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- **Handwashing Tips**

### Clean surfaces frequently

- Use household cleaner to wipe frequently touched surfaces clean, i.e., tabletops, doorknobs, bathrooms, keyboards, mobile devices.
- See CDC Guidance for cleaning and disinfecting.

### Ending home isolation. You can leave your “sick room” and home when:

- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever) without the use of medicine that reduces fevers AND
- Other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved) AND
- At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared

**If you are experiencing symptoms or think you’ve been exposed to COVID-19, call the Health Care Center before going to your appointment.**

**COVID-19 Resources**

- [North Carolina Department of Health](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)](#)
- [World Health Organization (WHO)](#)
- [SAS: Coronavirus Updates](#)
- [Work/Life Resources: Coping with Coronavirus (COVID-19)](#)
- [SAS: Medical Plan Information for Coronavirus (COVID-19)](#)
- [SAS Yammer Group: Coronavirus employee resources](#)
- [COVID-19 Test: Nasal Throat Swab Demo](#)

*Updated: April 29, 2020*