



Our approach to coronavirus: A message to our families

We understand you may have rising concerns about COVID-19. CHOC Children's Primary Care Network, in conjunction with our public health leaders, is taking the necessary steps to protect the safety of our patients and their families, our staff and our Orange County community.

Effective Wednesday, March 18, we will be implementing the following practices:

- We are screening all patients for COVID-19 risks, by phone when families make appointments, and upon arrival for well and sick visits.
- Children who are at risk for COVID-19 will be evaluated in their cars. When you arrive, please call the office and one of our physicians will come to you in your car and perform appropriate testing there. Please stay in your vehicle.
- Unless logistically impossible, we ask that only one additional family member should accompany each patient to their appointment. Please leave siblings at home if feasible. See below for more information regarding this change.
- Our Ladera Ranch office has been designated as a "sick office." Children with respiratory or other potentially contagious symptoms, such as nasal congestion, cough, ear pain, drainage from eyes or nose, fever, vomiting or diarrhea, will be seen only at our Ladera Ranch office. Given school and work closures, our Ladera Ranch office has temporarily canceled evening after-hours; Saturday appointments are still available for sick visits.
- All other offices (Lake Forest, Rancho Santa Margarita, San Clemente) are designated as "well offices." Children who need well visits or who have non-respiratory issues, such as behavioral health concerns (ADHD, anxiety), injuries, musculoskeletal problems, rashes not associated with illnesses, can also be seen in these offices through a same-day or future appointment.

We request your cooperation with and understanding of the following, as we partner to care for your child.

If an office visit can be avoided, it is best to stay at home.

We offer several ways to interact with a provider from the comfort and safety of your home. We have designated nurse and physician support for phone calls and triage. These providers may be able to handle your question over the phone, saving you an unnecessary appointment. We will also have telehealth visits available when appropriate. When you call to schedule an appointment, the scheduler will ask a set of screening questions, and if appropriate, they will offer you a telehealth appointment. They will then send you a link through which you can connect with a CHOC pediatrician at your appointment time.

You are going to be asked more questions.

Your history of potential COVID-19 exposure and travel history are possible clues to your family's risk. We are verbally screening on the phone and at every well and sick visit prior to entry into our clinical areas. If there is any worry about potential exposure, you will be asked to stay in your car, where your child will be evaluated.

The waiting room is fast-tracked.

One of the best ways to decrease the immediate impact of this pandemic is to practice social distancing. Our waiting room space will be used for a brief check-in at the window, before you and your child will



be promptly taken into a private exam room. If all of our exam rooms are occupied, you may be asked to wait in your car.

Well-child care is still important.

Now, more than ever, we want to be able to address any questions and ensure the health and wellness of your child. We have designated 'well offices' to continue to provide important well-child and preventative care to your family.

Your well-child appointment may be moved to a different location and possibly a different time.

We may need to cancel certain well visits if they can be safely delayed to accommodate surging demand. We will call you as soon as we are able to accommodate you. We may ask you to move your appointment to another location, date or time. We will call you with these changes.

You may see a different provider.

We will be moving our providers around to ensure adequate staffing. If your previously scheduled well-child check provider is working in a sick location, you will be given the option of seeing a different provider or rescheduling for a future date, which is yet unknown. We encourage you to be flexible with our providers.

Our cleaning procedures are rigorous.

We will continue to thoroughly sanitize our entire office to the most rigorous standards. Both sick and well offices will be cleaned multiple times a day, in addition to the medical grade sanitization we have always provided.

No one will come to work sick.

This has always been our policy, but we will be extra cautious in the current climate. Please be aware that there may be occasions when we will need to make last-minute cancellations or location/provider changes due to staffing issues. We will always do our best to accommodate our patients, and appreciate your patience and flexibility.

We are protecting those at greatest risk.

Please make your best efforts to limit each visit to only the scheduled patient and one care provider. Additional partners and caregivers are welcome to join the visit through FaceTime or phone. We are also sensitive to the generation at greatest risk from COVID-19 and recommend that all people over the age of 60 stay at home. We have asked our providers and staff over the age of 60 to support telehealth visits, phone triage and well-visit locations to minimize the risk of exposure.

Our phone lines are busy.

We anticipate our phone lines being more busy than normal. Thank you, in advance, for your patience with our staff, who remain dedicated to providing the best customer service.

Please stay tuned to our social channels for up-to-date changes. We also encourage you to visit choc.org/coronavirus for helpful tips and resources. This is a rapidly evolving situation and our efforts to provide you with the safest and most effective care will not stop. We are confident we will be able to work through these next several months together.

The Providers and Staff of Southern Orange County Pediatric Associates