

From: UC Health <UCHealth@UCHealth.com>
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To: UC Health <UCHealth@UCHealth.com>
Subject: COVID-19 Update



TO: UC Health Employees & Clinicians

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DATE: Wednesday, March 11, 2020

RE: COVID-19 Update

The World Health Organization and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention continue to closely monitor areas of increased viral spread around the world and in the United States. Fortunately, the number in the tristate region remains low (with no confirmed cases in Cincinnati at this time).

Current evidence still shows that 80% of people with COVID-19 have a mild disease similar to the common cold. The most common symptoms seen are cough, shortness of breath and fever. We are diligently following evolving research for ways to enhance our response to the virus. System, hospital, clinical and ambulatory leadership are working to focus our response plans around existing knowledge and potential future developments. All service areas of our system are represented in daily meetings to ensure best practices, optimal care and employee safety.

Continue to visit the [CDC COVID-19 website](#) for the most up to date information about the virus. As recommendations are adjusted, we will continue to integrate them into our plans. As clinical decision making questions arise, the 584-WASH telephone is available to provide support. We ask that you notify this number before any COVID-19 tests are ordered. Providers should have received an email outlining the process surrounding laboratory testing.

Required Education Assigned

All employees and physicians should have received a link from myKnowledge with a required learning module regarding COVID-19. You can also access the training module [here](#). The training takes approximately 5-10 minutes to complete; this knowledge is important as we each play an important role in keeping ourselves, each other and our patients safe.

Response Coordination & Communication

The UC Health incident command center has been open and functioning since Monday, March 2nd. The daily COVID-19 specific huddle continues to occur with a large number of leaders from our various sites and departments, including subject matter experts. During these meetings, CDC updates are provided and specific issues or opportunities for improvement are escalated and addressed. If you have questions about your site or department's representation on this call, please address with your manager or contact the COVID-19 hotline at the contact information below.

HIPAA & Coronavirus

The Office for Civil Rights recently sent a reminder to all employers, especially those involved in providing healthcare, that we must still comply with the protections contained in the HIPAA Privacy Rule during the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. UC Health may share protected health information (PHI) with public health authorities when there is a legitimate need to do so to enable them to carry out their public health responsibilities, but we must limit disclosure to

legitimate need to do so, to enable them to carry out their public health responsibilities, but we must limit disclosures to the *minimum necessary* to the purpose. Generally, HIPAA does not permit disclosure of PHI to the news media, social media, others not involved on the care team, or the general public, without the patient's HIPAA-compliant authorization; it is no different now. **UC Health must comply with HIPAA, even in an outbreak of any infectious disease or other public health emergency.** The usual limitations on uses and disclosures of PHI remain in effect.

Employee Wellbeing Resources

We know with a public health situation such as COVID-19 it is common to experience fear or uncertainty. It's why we're committed to sharing the latest updates and resources to help keep you informed through our new [designated channel on The Link](#). If you feel any additional concerns or stress, we encourage you to contact the UC Health Employee Assistance Program (EAP). EAP is a free, confidential counseling service staffed by licensed counselors and social workers and available to all UC Health employees. Schedule a confidential appointment or phone consultation with UC Health's Employee Assistance Program by calling 513-585-6100. [Learn more about EAP on The Link](#).

Media and Social Media Guidelines

Per our [News Media Policy](#), if you or anyone in your department is contacted by a member of the media, please direct them to the UC Health Media Relations department (media hotline: 513-503-3368 or email: media@uhealth.com). Personnel are not permitted to present themselves in social media as a representative of, or spokesperson for, UC Health without the express written authorization of Marketing & Communications.

When using social media, be aware that existing UC Health policies apply. This includes policies that pertain to patient privacy, electronic communications, media relations, and other applicable laws. Please note that your online comments could be misrepresented as official UC Health statements and used by media outlets without your consent. You are welcome to follow the official UC Health social media accounts and share the public information provided there and on uhealth.com. If you have any questions, please contact Amanda Nageleisen, director of corporate media relations. You can also review our [Social Media Policy](#) for more information.

What's Next

Our [designated channel](#) on The Link has been viewed more than 2,000 times since it launched just a week ago. Please continue to share this resource with your colleagues. Please talk to your teams about this information and ensure those that may not check their emails regularly are aware of this communication and the available resources and contacts.

A letter is being sent this week to our ambulatory patients. A copy of this letter can be found on [The Link](#) for your reference.

Travel Restrictions

An update on travel was sent in the early afternoon on March 9. Excerpts from this memo follow below.

Work-Related Travel Restrictions

UC Health will follow the [CDC recommendations](#) regarding travel; therefore, we prohibit any work-related travel to countries that are CDC Warning Level 3. As of today (March 9), travel is restricted to China, South Korea, Italy and Iran. **Anyone returning from a restricted country (for professional or personal reasons) must immediately report to the Employee Health Injury Hotline by calling 513-585-8000 as soon as they return to the United States. A fourteen (14) day self-quarantine using a symptom monitoring checklist will be required.**

Before You Travel

We have received a high volume of questions related to professional and personal travel. Please know that any travel has the potential to increase your risk of exposure. Necessity of travel should be considered, including the avoidance of large crowds. Increase your adherence to good hand hygiene and avoid touching high traffic surfaces such as handrails or carts. You may want to consider carrying hand sanitizer or anti-bacterial wipes.

When You Return

When returning from any travel, including travel within the United States, closely monitor your symptoms. If you are having any of the following symptoms: fever, cough or shortness of breath, you should call the Employee Health Injury Hotline at 513-585-8000. Employee Health will respond with appropriate health guidance based on your individual situation.

Questions/Contacts

For employees and physicians:

UC Health Internal COVID-19 Questions: (513) 584-WASH or covid19@uhealth.com
UC Health Employee Health Injury Line: (513) 585-8000

For patients and the community:

Ohio Department of Health COVID-19 Line: 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634)
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Thank you for your leadership and engagement.

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