

COVID Update April 19, 2021

This message contains important information about office updates and COVID vaccines.

1. Office Updates

All of us are struggling to manage the challenges and fears of the 3rd wave. We want you to know that as your physicians, we are working extremely hard. In addition to all that we usually do, we are assisting in assessment and vaccination clinics and working with our hospitals and community partners to try to improve access to care. We also face the possibility of being redeployed to assist with hospital care. Our staff have been amazing in triaging your phone calls and emails, responding to questions and balancing our schedules; the volume of messages is frankly overwhelming. In light of current stay at home orders, we have made the decision to reduce the number and hours of staff in the office.

To help us manage this difficult time, please read the following instructions, which apply until the end of the lockdown (May 20).

All current appointment bookings (phone and in-person) will continue unless you hear otherwise. You will receive a COVID screening form if your appointment is in-person.

DO call the office if you have an acute concern about a change in your physical or mental health.

DO email the office if you want to cancel an appointment.

DO NOT call or email the office to book routine follow up appointments or check-ups at this time, except for prenatal visits and well baby visits with immunizations.

DO NOT call or email the office asking for prescription renewals. You should ask your pharmacy to fax a renewal request.

DO NOT call or email the office requesting referrals for non-urgent matters, e.g. dermatology or routine blood work.

DO NOT call or email the office looking for routine results. If you have a question about abnormal results, please email the office.

DO NOT call the office to follow up on routine referral and imaging requests.

DO NOT call or email the office asking for documentation regarding eligibility for vaccination or for early access to second doses. No documentation is required at vaccine clinics if you are eligible, and there is no access to early second doses other than for those who meet current public health stipulations.

2. Vaccine Updates

We can't say it strongly enough: the best vaccine is the one you can get!!

We highly recommend the video below: Which COVID-19 vaccine is better?

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1880969283645>

As of Tuesday April 20, people over 40 will be eligible to receive the Astra Zeneca vaccine. If you are eligible for Astra Zeneca through the pharmacy route, please book your appointment. We all share frustrations about the vaccine roll out system, and hope to see as many people receive their first doses as possible, as quickly as possible, to allow us all to move forward.

3. Mammograms and Vaccination

Current recommendations are that mammograms be delayed for 6 weeks following a COVID vaccine. Vaccination can sometimes trigger enlargement of the lymph nodes under the arms. This is a normal response to the vaccine that resolves with time. If you have a routine mammogram coming up please rebook your appointment for 6 weeks after your vaccine.

Stay safe and well –

Leslie Beyers

Karen Fleming

Claire Murphy

Jennifer Wyman