

To our Team at Asti's Pharmacy,

Re: COVID-19

As with the rest of the world, we are closely monitoring the developments of the global pandemic involving the virus, COVID-19 – the coronavirus.

The management team feels that now is the appropriate time to share with you our updated policies and procedures for how we intend on managing this situation to protect the health of our staff and the patients that we serve.

Due to the critical nature of our work, it's necessary that we remain fully operational to ensure that our patients do not go without medicine. We all share the responsibility to minimize the likelihood of viral transmission, so it is critical that you each do your part and follow the instructions below.

Current data suggests that this virus causes minimal damage to healthy individuals under the age of 50. However, for elderly people – especially those with certain chronic conditions – infection with COVID-19 can have life-threatening implications. Many of the patients that we serve fall into the high-risk category, and we must act responsibly to reduce the chance of passing the virus to our patients. The CDC has a wealth of information on this subject, and I encourage you all to read through some of these materials: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>.

The following policies go into effect immediately, and will be in place until further notice:

Personal Sanitation:

1. You are asked to wash or sterilize your hands immediately upon arriving at work. Please do not touch any workstations or computers before cleaning your hands (this includes “clocking-in”). You should plan on arriving at work a few minutes earlier than you typically do, to allow enough time to clean your hands.
2. **Clean your hands often.**
 - a. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or **after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing**. You can also use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
 - b. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
3. Use disposable gloves when handling medications. Nitrile gloves will protect your hands from frequent washing or sterilization with alcohol. Do your best to not waste gloves or cleaning supplies, as there may be availability issues – we want to ensure that we have adequate supplies to support our needs.

Workstation Sanitation:

1. Clean your workstation at the beginning and end of your shift – and any time you change workstations. Your workstation includes:
 - a. Keyboard
 - b. Mouse
 - c. Telephone
 - d. Headset
 - e. Pens/Sharpies

- f. Notepads
- g. Counting trays
- h. And any other relevant items

Food Consumption:

1. Food is not permitted at your workstation. You are not permitted to eat while working. All food must be consumed at the lunch table – you must clean your hands before and after consuming any food.
 - a. Potlucks have been suspended until further notice.
 - b. Sharing of food is not permitted.
2. Drinks are permitted at your workstation, but please ensure that you're not splashing liquids – and cleaning your hands accordingly.

Travel:

1. You must notify management of any intended travel outside of the Pittsburgh area. You must share dates as well as the destination.
2. For your safety and the safety of others, we discourage all from travelling – especially to areas with documented cases of the virus.
 - a. Depending on the travel destination, you may be required to self-quarantine for upwards of 14 days upon your return.

Social Distancing:

1. While we are instituting operational changes at the pharmacy, we also ask you to limit your contact with others outside of work. Your efforts to minimize your exposure to other individuals – who may potentially be carriers of the virus – will further reduce risk of transmission.
2. You should avoid gatherings of greater than 15 people, and if you cannot avoid these gatherings – we strongly encourage you to use the same techniques of hand washing and avoidance described above.
3. If you become aware that you have had contact with an individual that has tested positive for COVID-19, please notify management immediately.

If you are feeling sick:

1. It is **critical that you notify management immediately**. You should remain home, and refrain from contact with any other people or animals in your home.
 - a. Please see the following link with instructions from the CDC:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>
2. You should contact your doctor immediately to determine if you should be seen or tested for COVID-19.

By following the processes described above, we will significantly reduce the chance of transmitting the infectious disease to one-another. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this guidance, please outreach to a manager as soon as possible.

From an HR perspective, if you are unable to come to work due to the virus, your situation will be handled individually. As of right now, any time missed from work will be unpaid (you will be required to first use any accrued PTO), but keep in mind that our organization will follow all applicable laws as promulgated by our state and federal officials. If you miss work, you will not accrue PTO until you return to work.

In addition to minimizing the risk of internal transmission, we will also be making changes to pharmacy operations to further reduce this risk.

Effective Immediately through March 30th, 2020:

Limiting Face-to-Face contact

1. We will be limiting customers and visitors from entering the pharmacy. Customers that come to the pharmacy will be asked to wait in their vehicles while their prescriptions are being prepared. When finished, a staff member will deliver the medication(s) to their vehicle, via “curb-side delivery”.
 - a. We will refrain from obtaining signatures from patients directly – instead an Asti’s staff member will sign on-behalf of the customer. The signature should read, “curbside CV19” – which shows the method of delivery and reason.
 - b. When patients bring paper prescriptions to the pharmacy to be filled – a staff member will need to retrieve this from the patient. The number of individuals handling the hardcopy should be limited, and hands should be cleansed immediately following the handling of these items.
2. We will also likely increase the number of medications that we ship to patients. All shipped medications should include “CV19” in the signature.
3. If a patient expresses a need to enter the pharmacy, please escalate that call to a manager or pharmacist. There may be a circumstance that requires a patient to enter (such as the need to receive an injection), but these decisions should be made by the pharmacist or manager.

We will be sending out communication to our customers via email, text, social media, as well as phone call to notify them of these changes. It’s critically important that you also inform patients of these changes when you speak to them on the phone.

Many patients may ask if they can obtain a 90-day supply of medications. At this time, and with the interest of all of our patients in mind, we will not be converting patients to 90-day supplies. There are not currently shortages of medications in the supply chain, and we do not want to artificially create shortages by dispensing excessive amount of medications to patients. We will be doing everything in our power to ensure that our patients do not go without medications, and if you encounter a conflict with a patient/customer – please escalate that call to a pharmacist immediately.

This situation is continuously evolving, and we will continue to update our policies as new information becomes available. Additional details on the changes with our workflow will be shared with you in the pharmacy, and you should expect this process to evolve as we fine-tune to the best practice.

Your support and cooperation with this process is greatly appreciated, and we are confident that our effectiveness in this effort will help to save lives.

Sincerely,

Dan, Jen, Gabe, Chris, Amy, and Samantha