



# KEEPING THE NORTH COUNTRY STRONG CLAXTON-HEPBURN MEDICAL CENTER

## VISITOR AND PATIENT INFORMATION

At Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center (CHMC) we understand the current COVID-19 pandemic has created a great deal of uncertainty within our community. The news changes daily, and most of our lives have been thrown into a new normal as businesses and schools remain closed, and we are asked to isolate at home.

With so many unknowns, we want you to rest assured knowing CHMC remains open and our healthcare professionals are actively ready to assist you during these times. Despite the evolving and ongoing pandemic, we remain dedicated to providing high-quality, personalized care to our patients and their loved ones for emergent and essential in-person appointments, testing, treatment, procedures, and surgeries.

However, we also understand there are valid concerns about visiting a doctor's office, ED, or hospital right now. We've compiled a list of answers to frequently asked questions about what to expect when you visit a CHMC facility, our virtual visits, as well as the safety procedures we have in place to protect our patients during their visit.

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT IN-PERSON VISITS

#### Is my doctor's office open?

Many of our practices remain open for our patients who require essential healthcare services. Additionally, several of our specialty services are being offered to patients via our secure virtual visit services. For more information, we encourage you to contact your physician directly by calling 315.713.6333.

#### Is it safe to visit the Emergency Department?

If you require medical attention, our emergency department facilities are safe to visit. The medical professionals at CHMC have developed several steps and policies to ensure the safety of all of our patients. In addition to COVID screening, cleaning, and sanitizing procedures, CHMC maintains separate units for treating patients with COVID-19 symptoms.

Do not risk your life by postponing treatment due to fear of exposure to COVID-19. If you are experiencing symptoms of a stroke, heart attack, or any other life threatening emergency, call 911 or go to your nearest emergency department to seek immediate care.

Please be advised:

- If you are a patient seeking emergency medical care, please call 315.713.5134 prior to your arrival.

I'm concerned about being exposed to COVID-19. What are you doing to protect patients during their visits?

While it's important to be aware of the seriousness of COVID-19, it's also just as important to take care of your health. At CHMC, we do not want you to risk your health by delaying care.

The following procedures have been established in accordance with the direction of the NYS Department of Health to ensure all of our patients remain healthy during their visit:

- All patients visiting our facilities are pre-screened for COVID-19 symptoms *before* arriving for their visit.
- All patients, staff, and providers are screened for COVID-19 symptoms before entering CHMC facilities, to include a temperature check.
- All patients are required to wear a mask or face covering while on the premises.
- All patients are required to adhere to our social distancing measures when there are other patients in the waiting areas.
- We have a team of professionals solely dedicated to thoroughly cleaning and sanitizing our sites throughout the day.

### **Does CHMC provide Virtual Visits?**

CHMC currently provides virtual visits for those patients who seek medical consultation for non-emergent or life threatening medical concerns. Our virtual visits provide a great option for our patients who prefer to have a video visit, as well as for patients who do not require diagnostic testing, lab work, or treatments. If you are unsure whether you need a video appointment or require an in-office visit, please contact your doctor's office at 315.713.6333.

### **My child is due for a well-visit, including some vaccinations. Are in-person pediatric appointments available?**

CHMC currently provides well-visits and immunizations onsite. Additionally, our pediatricians continue to offer virtual visits to children of all ages.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SURGICAL PROCEDURES AND LABOR AND DELIVERY**

### **Are you still conducting surgical procedures?**

CHMC has resumed scheduling elective surgeries. Our medical and surgical teams have incorporated a process for screening & testing, which provides a high-level of patient and staff safety. All patients will be tested for COVID-19 prior to their scheduled surgery.

### **Can I postpone my surgery? If so, when will I be able to reschedule?**

As with any planned surgery or procedure, we must weigh the risk of delay with the benefit of having your surgery. In some cases, it may not be safe to wait longer. We have expertise in caring for patients with complex health needs and in infection prevention and control. Your surgeon and their team are working diligently to decide whether your surgery can be safely delayed. If you are contacted to set up your surgery, they feel the benefits of doing your surgery outweigh the risks of coming to the hospital. If you are wondering if your surgery can be delayed until after the COVID-19 pandemic, talk with your surgeon.

### **Is it safe to come to the hospital to have a baby or surgery?**

CHMC has strict procedures in place for surgical patients. Additionally, the hospital is still the safest place to deliver your baby. The following procedures have been established in accordance to the direction of the NYS Department of Health to ensure all of our patients remain healthy during their visit:

- CHMC maintains separate units for COVID-19 positive and COVID-19 negative patients. *If you are not a COVID-19 positive patient, you will not be treated in the same unit as those patients who have tested positive for the virus.*
- Patients scheduled for surgery are tested for COVID-19 before their surgery is performed.
- Laboring mothers and their designated visitor are tested for COVID-19 upon admission to the hospital.

### **Am I allowed to accompany my loved one in the hospital during labor and delivery or surgery?**

At the direction of NYS Department of Health, all hospital visitations are now suspended, EXCEPT for patient support persons, or family members and/or legal representatives of patients in imminent end-of-life situations.

Additionally, laboring women are permitted at least one support person for the duration of their stay as medically appropriate. Any and all visitors meeting these exceptions will be screened for symptoms or potential exposure to someone with COVID-19 before entering the hospital facility.

### **What is the best way to make an appointment?**

If you are interested in scheduling an appointment, please call 315.713.6333.

### **Additional Resources**

At CHMC we remain dedicated to providing the highest-quality in personalized patient care, during this pandemic and well beyond. For more information pertaining to the virus, as well as the most up-to-date information, we encourage you to visit/call the following:

- Claxton-Hepburn Medical Center: <https://www.claxtonhepburn.org/>
- CHMC Nursing Advice Hotline: 315.713.6655
- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/share-facts.html>
- The New York State Department of Health: 24-hour hotline at 888.364.3065