

COVID-19

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

As a cancer patient, am I at additional risk for catching COVID-19?

Patients with compromised immune systems, including many cancer patients, are more susceptible to viruses, including COVID-19. Some cancer therapies, such as targeted drugs, steroids, as well as some cancer types, like blood cancers, can result in a weakened immune system.

As a cancer patient, if I am at higher risk, how can I protect myself?

You, your caregivers, and close contacts can take proactive measures to protect yourselves and those around you from COVID-19 and the flu, including these common-sense prevention steps:

- **Wash your hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds and frequently. If soap and water are unavailable, use alcohol-based hand rub.**
- **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Throw tissues in the trash.**
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.**
- **Avoid close contact with sick people.**
- **Stay home if you are not well.**
- **Avoid large crowds while receiving therapy.**
- **Disinfect frequently touched surfaces with household cleaning spray or wipe.**
- **Call Texas Oncology first if you have concerns.**

Should I wear a facemask?

The CDC does not recommend that the general public wear facemasks. Facemasks are recommended for patients who have flu or other infectious illnesses, including coronavirus (COVID-19).

What precautions is Texas Oncology taking in light of the COVID-19 situation?

Texas Oncology is closely monitoring COVID-19, including the latest updates from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The CDC-recommended protocols for healthcare providers regarding COVID-19 are aligned with Texas Oncology's existing protocols for flu season. During flu season, we emphasize an array of preventative measures that protect our patients and staff from exposure to illness. These include:

- **Hand hygiene (washing hand with soap and/or alcohol-based sanitizers)**
- **Isolating patients who come into our locations exhibiting respiratory or flu-like symptoms.**

Very Important: If you have flu-like symptoms, you should contact Texas Oncology before visiting our clinics for scheduled appointments. This includes fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as coughing or difficulty breathing.

Also, we are permitting only one caregiver to accompany patients to our locations at this time.

What should I do if my caregiver has traveled to China or other locations where the COVID-19 outbreak is severe?

You should avoid contact with anyone, including a caregiver, who has traveled to locations where the COVID-19 outbreak is severe for at least 14 days upon their return. If you or anyone you have already been in contact with have traveled to these locations, please contact Texas Oncology before visiting our clinics. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regularly updates travel advisories and information related to travel and COVID-19.

If your caregiver or close contact is sick, encourage them to seek medical attention, and avoid contact with them until they are well, e.g., free from fever for at least 24-48 hours.

Where can I get more information?

As the COVID-19 situation changes, we will keep our staff and our patients updated. For more information on COVID-19, Texas Oncology recommends the following resources:

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)
- **World Health Organization:** [who.int/coronavirus](https://www.who.int/coronavirus)
- **Texas Department of State Health Services:** dshs.state.tx.us/coronavirus
- **Texas Oncology:** TexasOncology.com/covid19