

Visitor policies

Q: What are the new BSWH hospital visitor policies?

A: To protect the safety of our patients and staff, and in accordance with the new local regulations surrounding the pandemic, Baylor Scott & White has moved to a no-visitor policy for our hospitals.

Q: If I'm pregnant and am going into labor at a BSWH hospital, will I be allowed to have visitors?

A: Yes, we will be offering limited exceptions to our visitation policy. This includes one parent, care partner or caretaker over the age of 16 for:

- Pediatric/NICU patients
- Labor/post-partum patients
- Patients undergoing surgery/testing/procedures
- Patients with disabilities
- Patients receiving end-of-life care

Patients and visitors will be screened upon arrival.



How you can help

During times like these, Texans are stronger together. If you feel compelled to give, consider making a gift to help us respond to the evolving needs of our patients, members, colleagues and communities. While we are committed to delivering quality care throughout this crisis, your support can make an impact. Consider giving blood or donating money, and learning the facts about COVID-19.

We are in it together, and your generosity will help us continue to meet the growing needs of our community in the coming weeks and months.

Please visit [BSWHealth.com/COVID19](https://www.bswhealth.com/COVID19) to learn how to give.

Questions? We have answers.
[BSWHealth.com/COVID19](https://www.bswhealth.com/COVID19)



TEXANS UNIFY PERSEVERE OVERCOME TOGETHER



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TEXANS stronger TOGETHER



In the Lone Star State, no one is alone. We band together because it takes a strong community to heal Texas.

Stand with us in the fight.

3 WAYS YOU CAN HELP



KNOW THE FACTS

GIVE BLOOD



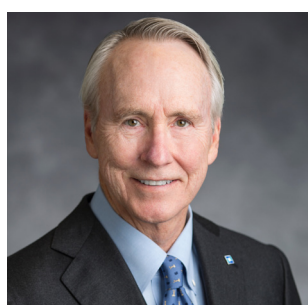
DONATE

[BSWHealth.com/COVID19](https://www.bswhealth.com/COVID19)



Your COVID-19 questions answered.

Dr. Winter uses CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) guidance to answer your questions about COVID-19, physical distancing and stay-at-home orders.



F. David Winter, MD, MSc, MACP
Dr. Winter serves on the Board of Baylor Scott & White Health. He is Board Certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine with professional interests in preventive medicine, quality improvement and patient safety.

How it spreads

Q: Can someone spread the virus without being sick?

A: People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest). Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of this occurring with COVID-19. But this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Keeping 6 feet away from others along with frequent hand washing to disinfecting is the best way to prevent the spread from asymptomatic carriers of the virus.

Q: How easily does the virus spread?

A: Unfortunately the COVID-19 virus is highly contagious. This means that it spreads easily. It is also sustainable, which means that it spreads continually without stopping. It is going to take great efforts by all of us to slow down this epidemic in our country.

Q: Will warm weather stop the outbreak of COVID-19?

A: It is not yet known whether temperature and weather will impact the spread of COVID-19. Some other viruses, like the common cold and flu, spread more during cold weather months, but that does not mean it's impossible to become sick with these viruses during other months. There is much more to learn about the transmissibility, severity and other features associated with COVID-19 and investigations are ongoing.

Q: Can I get COVID-19 from my pets or other animals?

A: There is no reason at this time to think that any animals, including pets, in the United States might be a source of infection with the new coronavirus that causes COVID-19. To date, the CDC has not received any reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19 in the United States.

Pets have other types of coronaviruses that can make them sick, like canine and feline coronaviruses. These other coronaviruses cannot infect people and are not related to the current COVID-19 outbreak.

However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals, such as washing your hands and maintaining good hygiene.

For more information on the many benefits of pet ownership, as well as staying safe and healthy around animals including pets, livestock and wildlife, visit CDC's Healthy Pets, Healthy People website at [cdc.gov/healthypets](https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets).



How to protect yourself and your family

Q: How do I prevent the spread of COVID-19?

A: Prevent the spread with these steps:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after you cough, sneeze, blow your nose or visit a public space. If soap isn't readily available, use hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your face – eyes, nose and mouth – with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with others.
- Follow public health advice regarding school closures, avoiding crowds and other social distancing measures.
- Stay informed and regularly check the CDC's COVID-19 Situation Summary at [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Q: What happens if there's an outbreak in my community?

A: During an outbreak, stay calm and put your preparedness plan to work. Follow the steps below:

Protect yourself and others.

Stay home if you are sick. Keep away from people who are sick. Monitor local guidance related to your county or city. Limit close contact with others as much as possible (about 6 feet).

Put your household plan into action.

- Stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation. Be aware of closures in and around your area.

- Continue practicing everyday preventive actions. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains 60% alcohol. Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily using regular household detergent and water.
- Stay in touch with others by phone or email. If you have a chronic medical condition and live alone, ask family, friends and healthcare providers to check on you during an outbreak. Stay in touch with family and friends, especially those at increased risk of developing severe illness, such as older adults and people with severe chronic medical conditions.

Q: Should I cancel my non-COVID-19 doctor appointments? What are my options?

A: The health of you and your loved ones should not be put on pause because of COVID-19. Baylor Scott & White patients with an upcoming scheduled visit will soon be contacted by their provider as we work to convert in-person appointments to one of our virtual care options, as appropriate.

Those options could include phone calls, messaging or video visits and eVisits on the MyBSWHealth app, or video conferencing using other appropriate virtual technology.

If you need a new appointment, this same technology could be available to you as well.

Q: While school is out, can my child hang out with friends?

A: The key to slowing the spread of COVID-19 is to limit contact as much as possible. If you have play dates scheduled, consider taking them virtual. Encourage older children to plan online hang-outs with their friends or to get outside for fresh air. It's easier to keep and maintain space between others in outdoor settings, like parks.

Try to limit in-person social interactions to family or friends from your household who are also taking extra measures to put distance between themselves and others (physical distancing). Make sure children practice everyday preventive behaviors, such as washing their hands often with soap and water. Right now children are not advised to meet outside of school in bigger groups, as it can put everyone at risk.

Information about COVID-19 in children is somewhat limited, but current data suggest children with COVID-19 may only have mild symptoms. However, they can still pass this virus onto others who may be at higher risk, including older adults and people who have serious underlying medical conditions.

Symptoms and testing

Q: What are the symptoms and complications COVID-19 can cause?

A: Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and difficulty breathing. There have been rare reports of abdominal symptoms that precede respiratory symptoms. Read about COVID-19 symptoms at [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

Q: Should I be tested for COVID-19?

A: Not everyone needs to be tested for COVID-19, per the CDC. It is important to keep in mind:

- Most people have mild illness and can recover at home
- There is no treatment specifically approved for this virus

• Healthcare providers are working to conserve testing capabilities for those at the highest risk

As recommended by the CDC, it is important for those treating mild symptoms at home to seek medical attention immediately if their symptoms worsen.

We are encouraging all patients experiencing flu-like symptoms (cough, shortness of breath and feeling feverish) to first visit the MyBSWHealth app and follow our free COVID-19 screening process. Text BETTER to 88408 to download the app and get started.

As always, in the event of a medical emergency, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department.

Free COVID-19 screening process

1 Get the app
Text BETTER to 88408
Download the MyBSWHealth App.

2 Virtual screening
ARE YOU AT RISK?
Find out by using MyBSWHealth App.

3 eVisit*
EVALUATION BY CLINICIAN
No out-of-pocket-costs.
*Patients with a pre-existing condition between the ages of 2-75 should seek care from their primary care physician or nearest clinic.



What to do if you are sick

Q: How can I help prevent the spread?

A: Recommendations:

- Stay home, except to get medical care
- Separate yourself from the other people in your home, also known as home isolation
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor
- Wear a face mask if you are sick
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Clean your hands often
- Avoid sharing personal household items
- Clean all "high-touch" surfaces every day

• Monitor your symptoms

Q: Should I avoid contact with pets or other animals?

A: You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while you are sick with COVID-19, just like you would around other people.

Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. When possible, have another member

of your household care for your animals while you are sick.

We know that the COVID-19 virus can survive on surfaces for up to several days, and, therefore, it is conceivable that an infected person could transmit the virus to the fur of your pet. So, keep your pets away from strangers and anyone who might be a carrier of the virus. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wear a face mask and wash your hands before and after you interact with pets.