

## **Keeping You Safe When You Have a Surgery or Procedure**

Keeping you, your family, and our communities healthy and safe is our top priority at Kaiser Permanente. We have many safety protocols in place to protect you when we welcome you for your surgery or procedure. Our infection prevention specialists are leaders in providing guidelines to help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. We follow the latest Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines and take infection prevention very seriously in all our facilities, including our exam and operating rooms.

When you come to our facilities for care, you'll notice a number of safety measures:

- At our facility entrances, you'll be asked important screening questions related to COVID-19. Your temperature will also be checked.
- A mask or face covering is required for everyone 2 and older.
- Visitors aren't allowed inside our facilities unless patients need their help.
- We've reconfigured our waiting areas, pharmacies, and cafeterias to help ensure safe environments that promote physical distancing of at least 6 feet, except during medical care.
- Our exam and operating rooms are cleaned and disinfected after each patient.

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### **Is there a difference in the safety measures taken at different locations?**

#### **Rigorous, Scientifically Sound Procedures Across our Organization**

No. All our care facilities are taking the same precautions to help prevent exposure to COVID-19.

**I received a call from my doctor's office to schedule my surgery, but I have concerns about my safety. What safety precautions and guidelines have you put in place?**



We've put in place the following safety precautions and guidelines in our hospitals and ambulatory surgery facilities:

**We're screening and testing.**

- All patients scheduled for a procedure are screened and tested for COVID-19. These measures are designed to identify anyone suspected to have COVID-19 before their arrival at our hospital or surgery center.
- Patients must get tested at a designated Kaiser Permanente testing location or other site 24 to 72 hours before their surgery or procedure. They must then self-quarantine until their appointment. If a patient tests positive, their procedure may be rescheduled unless it's urgent or an emergency.
- All patients are screened when they arrive at our facilities. Some may be offered a text-based pre-appointment screening before arrival.
- We'll immediately separate anyone in the facility who we believe may have COVID-19 before they encounter other patients, and then we'll offer testing as appropriate.
- All staff members and physicians are screened daily. They don't come to work if they have symptoms related to COVID-19.

**We require universal masking and wear appropriate protective equipment.**

- Everyone 2 and older must wear a mask or face covering in our facilities. If you don't have your own, we'll provide one for you. If you can't wear a mask for a medical reason, we'll try to accommodate you by providing an alternative, such as a face shield.
- All surgical staff wear face masks, face shields, gowns, and gloves.
- We've put measures in place to reduce patient contact with surfaces and staff at check-in and checkout.

**We're extremely focused on keeping our facilities clean.**

- We thoroughly clean and disinfect surfaces and equipment using products that are effective against a range of organisms and viruses, including the coronavirus that causes COVID-19.
- We clean our waiting rooms frequently.
- We clean and disinfect our exam, treatment, procedure, and operating rooms frequently, including after each patient, according to the guidelines of our Kaiser Permanente infection prevention experts, the CDC, and the California Department of Public Health.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol is available throughout our facilities.
- Our doctors, nurses, and all medical staff members sanitize or wash their hands before and after interacting with patients.

**We minimize the number of people at facilities and practice physical distancing.**

- For now, we're limiting who may accompany a patient into our care facilities. We'll return to our regular visitor policies as soon as possible.
- Our waiting room chairs are spaced 6 feet apart, and only a few patients are allowed in waiting rooms at a time.
- The number of staff members in exam, treatment, procedure, and operating rooms is limited. Only those essential to your care are present. We maintain at least 6 feet between people except when we're taking care of patients.

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**Preparing for Your Surgery or Procedure**

- All patients are screened for symptoms and tested for COVID-19. We'll call you to schedule your COVID-19 test at a designated Kaiser Permanente testing location or other location 24 to 72 hours before your surgery or procedure.
- After testing, you'll be instructed to self-quarantine until your surgery or procedure.
- Over the phone, we'll review instructions on what you need to do before your surgery or procedure.

- You'll also be screened by answering the following questions:
    - Do you have any of these symptoms?
      - Cough
      - Fever or chills
      - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
      - Muscle or body aches
      - Sore throat
      - New loss of taste or smell
      - Diarrhea
      - Headache
      - New fatigue
      - Nausea or vomiting
      - Congestion or runny nose
    - Does anyone in your household have COVID-19, or have you encountered someone you know has COVID-19?
  - You'll get a phone number where you can reach us in case you have questions about your appointment.
  - We'll verify your COVID-19 test result 1 to 2 days before your procedure.
  - If you test positive for COVID-19, we'll call you. If your procedure isn't urgent or an emergency, we may reschedule it and discuss next steps with you.
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## **COVID-19 Safety Precautions for You to Take**

### **What COVID-19 safety precautions should I take before my surgery or procedure?**

You and your family should:

- Wash your hands frequently
- Clean surfaces frequently
- Wear masks or other face coverings in public
- Practice physical distancing

## **Precautions to Make Sure Our Staff Aren't Sick**

### **How does Kaiser Permanente make sure our nurses, doctors, and staff members aren't sick?**

Our clinical staff answer COVID-19 screening questions every day and attest that they don't have symptoms of possible COVID-19 infection.

Anyone who reports symptoms is instructed to leave work immediately and report those symptoms to their clinical leaders so they can be evaluated and tested for COVID-19, if needed. Employees aren't allowed to work if they have symptoms, and they must be cleared by Occupational Health Services before returning to work.

### **On the Day of Your Appointment**

When you arrive, please follow the instructions you received when your appointment was scheduled. For some appointments, you'll be asked to wait outside the facility (for example, in your car) and call the registration phone number. You'll be told when you can go into the waiting room. If you need assistance getting inside, we'll provide a safe escort.

### **Visitor Policy**

For now, we're limiting who may accompany a patient into our care facilities. We'll return to our regular visitor policies as soon as possible.

## **Communicating with Your Family**

### **How will my family be notified that I'm out of surgery or that my procedure is completed?**

Because there are strict limits on visitors during the pandemic, our care team will call your family as early as possible at the number you've shared with us. We'll give them an update on your condition, how the surgery or procedure went, and when you'll be able to go home. Many locations are also using video to help families communicate with loved ones recovering from surgeries.