

Our team at Lake Shore Obstetrics and Gynecology wants to ensure that you have the best information to protect and care for you and your family as we learn more about the novel coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

While there are many people concerned about COVID-19, people who are at most risk for the virus are those who:

Are experiencing symptoms of fever, cough and shortness of breath AND have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 OR have traveled in an area with widespread or ongoing community spread of the virus (as of March 5, these countries include China, Iran, Italy, South Korea and Japan).

Symptoms would appear 2-14 days after exposure.

IF you meet the criteria above we recommend the following:

Avoid exposing others to illness and contact your primary care physician about potential exposure and symptoms. They can then determine the appropriate avenue for testing.

At this point widespread testing is not available. In the coming days we anticipate that if available the testing will be available to those meeting the above criteria and at the highest risk.

IF you have severe symptoms of respiratory illness please go to the emergency department. Call us ahead of time and we can let them know about your symptoms and recent travel.

IF you do not have symptoms but are concerned due to recent travel or exposure to a person with a confirmed case of COVID-19, please stay home and monitor your health for 14 days. You do not need to be seen by a health care provider if you do not have symptoms.

At present there is limited data on pregnancy and COVID-19, but what we are seeing from the China and Japan groups is not concerning at this time for transmission from mother to infant. Additionally, pregnant women do not appear to be at higher risk for severe disease. The World Health Organization currently states that mothers with COVID-19 can breastfeed. We are paying close attention to the data from the CDC and the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and will update any recommendations should they change.

Finally, as always during flu season, here is a reminder of everyday actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases:

- avoid close contact with people who are sick
- avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds

Below are some links to reliable sources for further information.

The Centers for Disease Control ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov))
The Chicago Department of Health ([chicago.gov](https://www.chicago.gov))
The Illinois Department of Health ([dph.illinois.gov](https://www.dph.illinois.gov))

Thank you,

Your healthcare team at Lake Shore Obstetrics and Gynecology