



Dear Scripps MD Anderson Cancer Patient,

As cases of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) have increased in San Diego County, we understand you may have questions and concerns. This message contains important information for cancer patients, health tips and more. Please help us in our efforts to protect you and others as we work to stop the spread of this virus.

COVID-19 symptoms can range from very mild flu-like illness to severe pneumonia. Symptoms can include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Newer evidence suggests that some are completely without symptoms and recover uneventfully.

The most important things you can do is clean your hands frequently with soap and water for 20 seconds or hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and be certain you are current on all your appropriate vaccinations (seasonal influenza, pneumonia, pertussis, and shingles). You should also practice social distancing and consider socially isolating yourself if you are on active treatments that may compromise your immune system, such as chemotherapy. Further recommendations for high-risk individuals can be found at [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

Some types of cancer treatment adversely affect the immune system. Many chemotherapy drugs cause a temporary decrease in your white blood cell counts, which can predispose an individual to infections. Radiation to extensive areas of the bone marrow can also adversely affect immune functioning. Other forms of treatment, such as hormonal therapy and surgery have less of an impact on immune functioning. Please feel free to speak to your oncology providers to fully understand the effect your treatments may have on infection risks.

It is important for cancer patients undergoing treatments to continue to receive these therapies. Our plans are to continue offering planned treatments throughout this crisis. Your doctor will always place your best interest first; weighing the potential risks of your disease, the risks of your treatment, and the benefits of this treatment.

If you develop respiratory symptoms and/or a fever, please contact your care team before coming into a Scripps facility. We are here to help you during this difficult time. For more details and the latest updates, visit [scripps.org/covid19](https://scripps.org/covid19).

Your Scripps MD Anderson Cancer Center Providers