

April 20, 2020

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973-972-2036

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Marco A. Zarbin, MD, PhD  
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**Uveitis**

David S. Chu, MD  
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Ronald J. Rescigno, MD  
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Dear Patient,

We value very highly the privilege of serving you. Trust is a critical component of the relationship between a physician and a patient, and it is with the goal of validating and augmenting your trust in us that we would like to inform you of the steps we have taken to ensure the safety of all our patients during office visits to the Doctors Office Center (DOC) at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic. We recognize that some of these measures may pose an inconvenience to some patients and their families, but all of the steps below have been undertaken with our primary responsibility as physicians in mind: *primum non nocere* ("first do no harm"). We are committed to providing a safe environment for you as well to providing outstanding ophthalmic clinical care.

**Actions We Are Taking Before You Arrive**

1. The premises is cleaned thoroughly on a daily basis.
2. Voice mail notifications of appointments explain that patients can be accompanied by not more than 1 person/guardian/spouse/parent with exceptions permitted only after consultation with your physician. This request reflects our need to minimizing crowding in the registration area and in the waiting room.
3. Voice mail notifications of appointments ask you to self-quarantine and consult with your family physician if you (or family member) have symptoms such as fever, cough, or difficulty breathing. This request reflects our attempt to prevent patients who may have viral infection from spreading it to our patients.

**Actions We Are Taking When You Arrive**

1. We ask that you arrive no sooner than 15 minutes before than your scheduled appointment (to reduce crowding in the registration area and in the waiting rooms).
2. A multilayered triage system has been established to screen out patients at high risk for COVID-19 infection, beginning at the entrance to the DOC building with repeat interrogation at the registration desk and finally by the ophthalmic technician.
  - a. When you step off the elevator onto DOC 6, you (and accompanying person) are hand sanitized, and your temperature is checked (non-contact). If you have a temperature  $\geq 100.2^{\circ}\text{F}$ , you will be directed off the floor and advised to be seen by your primary care doctor unless this visit is an ophthalmic emergency. If the visit is an emergency, the physician will be called to assess your need for examination on the floor. If an exam on the floor is needed, a dedicated room will be assigned to you. All personnel caring for you will wear personal protective equipment (PPE).
  - b. If you have a temperature  $\geq 100.2^{\circ}\text{F}$  and lower respiratory symptoms such as cough or difficulty breathing, you (and accompanying person) will be hand sanitized, masked, and instructed to go to the F level in the Ambulatory Care building on campus. We will contact the triage nurses to advise them that you (and accompanying person) are en route. If you have an ophthalmic emergency, the protocol in 2.a. will be followed.
  - c. If your temperature is  $< 100.2^{\circ}\text{F}$ , you (and accompanying person) will proceed to the registration desk, and you will be asked about risk factors for COVID-19 exposure (e.g., travel history, exposure history, symptoms of fever or respiratory tract infection). If screening is negative, you (and accompanying person) will be given an identification sticker labeled with: "your initials, date, T, Q". **Please wear it.** Initials identify you (and accompanying person); date indicates the visit date; T indicates that temperature was checked (not the actual temperature value); and Q indicates that you (and accompanying person) were asked screening questions and had no risk factors.
3. You (and accompanying person) will be issued a face mask. **Please wear it at all times!** Use it to cover your nose **and** mouth.

4. We have altered our dress code for your safety. Your doctor and allied health personnel will be wearing surgical attire (scrubs) or clothing that can be washed and dried at high heat on a daily basis. This step ensures that none of our clothing is contaminated with virus from surfaces or patient contact.

**Actions We Are Taking After You Leave**

We have developed an extensive room cleaning protocol that is executed by the ophthalmic technicians for **each exam room** after the patient leaves the room at the close of their visit. This protocol includes cleaning **all** instruments used for patient examination, **all** surfaces in the room (including exam chairs), and computers and keyboards.

Thank you again for allowing us to serve you. Should you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact us at 973-972-2065.

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