

## Sabine County Hospital Monitors COVID-19 Situation

Hemphill, Texas (3/13/2020) –

Sabine County Hospital is closely monitoring the COVID-19 situation and is implementing strict protocols to protect our patients and staff. In an attempt to mitigate the risk of COVID-19, we will be following several recommended measures from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) such as patient and visitor restrictions, prevention measures, supply chain protocols, and giving updates to the community.

**Know the difference between COVID-19, Influenza, the common cold, and seasonal allergies.  
 Some common signs & symptoms of each:**

Signs & Symptoms	COVID-19	Influenza	Common Cold	Seasonal Allergies
Fever	✓	✓		
Cough	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fatigue	✓	✓		
Shortness of Breath	✓			
Runny or stuffy nose		✓	✓	✓
Sore throat	Possible	✓	✓	
Body Aches	Possible	✓	✓	
Headache	Possible	✓	✓	
Chills or sweats		✓		
Sneezing				✓
Itching of the eyes, nose, or throat				✓
Swollen or puffy eyelids				✓

According to the CDC, the average incubation period for COVID-19 can range from 2-14 days & not everyone with the infection will feel unwell. Some observations show that symptoms can worsen during the second week of the illness. Note that COVID-19 and the flu share many similar symptoms. Differences are that symptoms of the Flu tend to come on suddenly where as COVID-19 symptoms develop more gradually.

**What are the risk factors?**

- Living or traveling in an area where COVID-19 illness is widespread or community transmission is occurring
- Being in close contact with someone who has a **confirmed** infection

**What can you do to protect yourself from the virus?**

- **Wash your hands frequently.** Wash hands with soap & water for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-bases hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

- **Avoid touching your face.** Viruses can be transmitted by touching your nose, mouth, or eyes.
- **Maintain distance.** Avoid close contact with people who are ill, avoid crowds, & limit all non-essential travel.
- **Don't share personal items.** These items may include eating or drinking utensils.
- **Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze.** Try to cough into the crook of your elbow or a tissue.
- **Stay home if you are sick.**
- **Clean surfaces.** Use household cleaning sprays or wipes to clean high-touch areas.
- **Keep yourself informed from reliable outlets.** The CDC regularly updates information as it becomes available.

**Also:**

- Make sure you have a supply of all essential medication for you and your family.
- Prepare for possible disruptions to daily routines such as a child care plan in case you or your caregiver is sick.

**What are some things we are doing to protect staff and patients?**

- Educating patients on the disease process.
- Minimizing exposure by limiting patient movement throughout the hospital.
- Using strict safety measures to reduce risk of disease transmission to patients and staff.
- Staying updated on all new protocols and information from the CDC, local health department, & the WHO.
- We are implementing the new visitation policy until further notice:
  - Visitations are limited to **two** adult caregivers or visitors 18 years of age or older.
  - **One** visitor is permitted to stay overnight.
  - Up to two **healthy** visitors who do not exhibit symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath are allowed to accompany patients in ambulatory settings or for outpatient procedures.
  - Visitors with one or more of the following symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath OR who have traveled to a COVID-19 area in the last 14 days should postpone their visit.
  - Patients under COVID-19 investigation will not be allowed any visitors unless under exceptional circumstances.
  - Vendors who do not provide direct health care services to patients will not be allowed to visit any clinical facility. Vendors who are engaged in other activities are encouraged to meet the respective SCH staff via telecommunication.

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO NOTE:**

- If you or a family member suspects COVID-19 transmission – PLEASE call ahead to prepare staff.
- Please note that the local Health Department decides which patients require testing. **You will not be tested just because you ask for it.**
- First and foremost, educate yourself and do not panic! Know that we are always here for you when you need it the most!

**Thank you for helping SCH promote wellness and safe care in the communities we serve!**

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