

# What to Expect When You Visit Our Clinics

**Please note: These guidelines are specifically for Our Lady of the Lake Physician Group's Head & Neck Center, Facial Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery Center, Voice Center, Hearing & Balance Center, Cleft Clinic, and Facial Nerve Disorders Clinic.**

Due to the recent and ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we have made a number of temporary changes in our usual procedures for patients who visit our clinic. These changes are designed to provide the best possible protection for you, and for all our patients and staff, and we appreciate your cooperation.

The following heightened safety measures are now in place. Some of these measures will be subject to change as we see further progress against the COVID-19 pandemic.

- Prior to your in-person visit, a screening virtual visit will be conducted (by telephone or video call) to determine the appropriate day and time for your appointment at our clinic. At that time, you will receive detailed information on how to prepare for your appointment.
- Depending upon the nature of your visit, and especially if it appears likely that you will need a procedure performed by your doctor at the time of your visit, your doctor may require you to undergo COVID testing prior to coming to the clinic. If you have questions about this, please ask your nurse or doctor before your scheduled visit.
- Every person who enters our building must wear a mask to cover the mouth and nose, until instructed by our staff to do otherwise. Currently our supply of surgical masks is quite limited, so homemade masks, scarves or bandannas are acceptable for this purpose.
- To protect you from possible exposure to COVID-19, no patients will wait together in our waiting room.
- We will ask you to arrive in the parking lot, stay parked in your car, and use your cell phone to call the clinic to check in. When it is time for your doctor visit, we will call you to let you know you can enter the building. Please do not enter the building until you have been called.
- At the building's entrance, you will receive a brief screening to be sure you are not having signs of COVID-19 infection, such as cough, shortness of breath, loss of sense of smell or taste, or flu symptoms such as body aches. You will have your temperature taken as well.
- If you know you are experiencing any of the above symptoms please call ahead and let us know beforehand. If so, or if you have a fever at the time of your visit, it may be necessary to reschedule.
- We will strictly limit the number of patients and staff in our clinics. Do not be surprised if the clinic space appears somewhat empty. This is for everyone's protection.
- New patients must do their intake paperwork ahead of time, through the online registration portal or by printing and filling out required forms at home before your visit. If this is not an option for you, please plan to arrive at least 30 minutes before your appointment, and we will get the paperwork to you so you can fill it out while waiting in your car.
- Only the patient, alone, will be allowed in the office. For children or adults who require a caretaker, only one attendant may accompany the patient. Everyone must wear a mask.
- Your doctors, nurses, and staff members will all wear masks during all visits.
- Be assured that we are performing frequent hand washing and diligent room sanitizing throughout the day.
- If your doctor determines that you need a procedure (such as endoscopic examination of the nose, mouth or throat, or a biopsy), you will be escorted to a procedure room where your doctor and staff may wear additional attire such as face-shields, gowns, and gloves and possibly special respiratory masks. These are all precautions taken for everyone's safety.
- Once a procedure is completed, additional discussion, advice, and counseling may take place in a separate conversation conducted by phone or video, shortly after you return home.

All of this is being done out of utmost caution to prevent further spread of COVID-19. We realize these special precautions are unfamiliar to most people, and we appreciate your patience and cooperation as we work through this unusual time.

Wishing you good health and continued safety,

Our Lady of the Lake Physician Group

