



**SHARMEL KASTEN, DO
FAMILY MEDICINE**

COVID19 UPDATE

December 23, 2020

Dear Patients,

Our team continues to closely follow new developments of COVID-19 (Coronavirus) as they unfold. We are tracking the situation through trusted resources (The Centers for Disease Control, the World Health Organization, and the Fresno County Department of Public Health). We will continue to follow up-to-date guidance from these resources to keep your health and safety as our top priority.

To date, we have taken continuous action to protect you and our staff. We've separated WELL & SICK patient office areas, we've installed air purifying and hepa filters to stop the spread of viruses and other air-borne contaminants in every room, we've instituted the practice of **TELEMEDICINE & TELEPHONE VISITS** in an effort to continue to provide medical care without an in person office visit. To this point, we have also provided the necessary personal protective equipment, such as masks, to you and our staff.

We also are happy to continue to provide any patient who is able to work from home with a supporting **LETTER TO YOUR EMPLOYER** during this COVID19 state of emergency.

Our **OFFICE PHONES WILL REMAIN OPEN Monday-Thursday 8am-5pm and Friday 8am-Noon**. Our urgent after hours cell phone will also remain in operation. We will continue to meet your needs for completion of needed paperwork through office drop-off/pick up or electronic exchange.

We ask for **YOUR HELP** during this difficult time by adhering to the following:

1. Please care for yourselves and your loved ones by following the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's **SHELTER IN PLACE, SOCIAL DISTANCING, & HYGIENE ETIQUETTE GUIDELINES** as strictly as possible.
2. If you are well but have traveled internationally, or have been exposed to someone who is suspected of having COVID19, please self-quarantine for 2 weeks before returning to work. Please contact our staff if our written support is needed.

3. If you are experiencing the following symptoms: fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other flu-like symptoms...please self-quarantine and notify our staff immediately to schedule a telemedicine or telephone appointment with Dr. Kasten or another provider for evaluation, treatment, and guidance.
4. Please continue to keep your health in top priority by contacting us for a telemedicine or telephone visit for SICK VISITS, NEW PROBLEMS, MEDICATION REFILLS, FOLLOW-UP LABS/IMAGING, FOLLOW-UP CHRONIC MEDICAL CONDITIONS, AND ANNUAL WELL VISITS FOR PREVENTIVE CARE. We are still here to care for your health and provide guidance and support.
5. Please understand governing agencies require a telemedicine visit with video for the refill or Rx of any controlled substance. Telephone visits are still not considered acceptable.

We encourage our patients to stay actively informed as this situation continues to evolve. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this ever-changing and demanding time. We look forward to seeing each and every one of you in person at the office one day soon!

Sincerely,
Dr. Kasten & Staff