

COVID-19 FAQ FOR CARDIOVASCULAR PATIENTS

WHAT SHOULD PATIENTS WITH CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE DO TO PROTECT THEMSELVES FROM COVID-19?

Patients with underlying medical conditions like cardiovascular disease may be at a higher risk for developing serious complications from COVID-19. UAB Medicine encourages patients with cardiovascular disease to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for people who need to take extra precautions. These recommendations can be found [here](#).

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO COVID-19 OR AM SHOWING POSSIBLE SYMPTOMS?

You have several options for testing if you think you may have COVID-19. You may call the 24/7 Alabama COVID-19 hotline at 888-264-2256 for testing site locations and the hours of operation of those locations. Also, in partnership with the Jefferson County Department of Health, UAB opened an appointment-based drive-through testing center that is open every day from 9 am to 11:15 am.

Patients experiencing COVID-19 symptoms may call 205-975-1881 for screening between 7 am and 5 pm. If patients meet the screening criteria, they will be given an appointment time at UAB's drive-through testing center. **Patients must have an appointment to be tested.**

Furthermore, please use [UAB's symptom tracker](#) at HelpBeatCOVID19.org to report your health status and symptoms, even if you are feeling healthy and especially if you have any underlying medical conditions like cancer, diabetes, heart disease, etc. Logging your symptoms daily will help us serve you better and learn more about tracking COVID-19 in our community.

HOW SHOULD I PROCEED WITH MY CARDIOVASCULAR CARE IF I HAVE CONFIRMED OR SUSPECTED COVID-19?

Your health and safety is our No. 1 priority. If you have an upcoming appointment with one of our cardiologists or surgeons or any other provider at UAB, and you have confirmed or suspected COVID-19, please do not come to UAB without receiving special instructions from your UAB care team. Please call your physician's office using one of the numbers listed below prior to your appointment for instructions.

Advanced Heart Failure: 205-934-3438
Adult Congenital Heart Disease: 205-975-7123
Cardiovascular Surgery: 205-801-8660
Electrophysiology: 205-934-2525
General Cardiology: 205-975-7123
Interventional Cardiology: 205-934-7898
Structural Heart & Valve: 205-975-1888
Vascular Surgery: 205-934-2003

If you are experiencing a true medical emergency, please call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. For non-emergency urgent care – if you have COVID-19 or think you've been exposed to it – please DO NOT go to the emergency room or come to UAB Medicine outpatient clinics for any reason. Instead, please contact your primary care doctor or call UAB HealthFinder at 205-934-9999 or toll-free at 1-800-822-8816 for instructions.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM EXPERIENCING HEART-RELATED SYMPTOMS?

Getting care when experiencing symptoms associated with your heart condition is critical. Call 911 if you think you are experiencing symptoms associated with a heart attack, such as chest pain, difficulty breathing, or discomfort in your chest, arms, back, neck, shoulder, or jaw.

Call your care team if you have questions about your heart condition or think you need a health visit. Don't delay routine care, whether it be in person or through a UAB eMedicine scheduled clinic video visit. We may be able to address your specific concerns through a virtual visit and will work with you to determine the best way for you to see your cardiologist or surgeon.

WHAT IS UAB DOING TO PROTECT ITS PATIENTS WITH CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE AND THE STAFF WHO TREAT THEM?

UAB Medicine cares for patients with complex health conditions, so we have expertise in infection prevention and control and in treating patients with infections. We are working hard to make sure that staff, patients, and their families are protected during this time.

UAB Medicine requires the use of face masks for patients and visitors who enter our hospitals and clinics, we perform temperature checks at all entry points, and we established separate patient care areas in The Kirklin Clinic of UAB Hospital to evaluate patients with possible COVID-19 symptoms.

Many of our outpatient departments are using UAB eMedicine online telehealth visits (phone or video) to reduce foot traffic in our hospitals and clinics and to help flatten the curve.

Finally, the UAB Environmental Services team is working around the clock to make sure our facilities are disinfected and remain clean for everyone. [Click here](#) to learn more about our cleaning procedures and for useful information about visiting our hospitals and clinics.

CAN MY APPOINTMENT BE SCHEDULED OR RESCHEDULED AS AN EMEDICINE SCHEDULED CLINIC VIDEO VISIT?

Physician and nursing leadership continue to work closely together to determine which appointments can safely be done using UAB eMedicine telephone or video visits. If you are interested in one of these options, please contact your care team. If you have an upcoming appointment with one of our providers, expect your care team to contact you by phone, letter, or Patient Portal message prior to your appointment. If you have not been contacted or you have questions related to an upcoming appointment, please call us at one of the numbers below:

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Please also contact your care team for more information related to your specific treatment.

SHOULD I BE WEARING A FACE MASK?

The CDC recommends that you wear a face mask or cloth face covering when you may be in close contact with others. Please understand that wearing a covering or mask is not a substitute for social distancing. It is still very important to stay at least 6 feet away from others.

UAB Medicine requires patients and visitors to wear face coverings in our facilities. If you are instructed by your care team to come into the clinic for your appointment, please bring a face covering.

UAB Medicine provides instructions for making your own cloth face mask, including sewn and no-sew versions, which are posted online [here](#).

WILL PATIENTS WITH CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE BE SAFE IN UAB HOSPITALS AND CLINICS WHILE UAB IS TREATING COVID-19 PATIENTS?

UAB Medicine is doing everything possible to keep our patients safe during this time. Specific measures have been taken to isolate patients who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are suspected of having the virus. This applies to our inpatient hospital units and our outpatient clinics.

I HAVE TO DRIVE A LONG DISTANCE TO UAB FOR MY APPOINTMENT OR PROCEDURE. IS IT SAFE TO DO SO, OR ARE THERE ALTERNATIVES?

When possible, UAB Medicine is providing high-quality care to our cardiovascular patients remotely using UAB eMedicine telehealth services (phone or video visits). Your care team members are discussing your care plan to determine if your appointment may be done in this way.

If you have an upcoming appointment with one of our providers, please expect your care team to contact you by phone, letter, or Patient Portal message prior to your appointment. If you have not been contacted or you have questions related to an upcoming appointment, please call us at one of the numbers below:

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I HEARD THAT UAB IS LIMITING THE NUMBER OF VISITORS AT ITS HOSPITALS AND CLINICS. DOES THIS APPLY TO APPOINTMENTS FOR CARDIOVASCULAR CARE AND SCHEDULED PROCEDURES?

For the safety of our staff, patients, and their families, UAB Medicine has implemented strict visitation guidelines at our hospital and clinic locations. This includes limitations on the number of visitors who can accompany patients on their visits. [Click here](#) to read our visitation policy.

Depending on your unique circumstances, a visitor may or may not be allowed to accompany you to your hospital or clinic visit. If you are a cardiovascular patient who meets certain conditions, one caregiver may accompany you during your visit to UAB. We expect both you and your caregiver to wear a mask throughout the duration of your visit, adhere to appropriate hand hygiene and social distancing practices, and comply with entrance screenings upon entering any UAB facility.

Please contact your UAB care team if you have any questions about the current visitor policy and how it would apply to you.

I NEED TO TRAVEL TO UAB TO PARTICIPATE IN A CARDIOVASCULAR-RELATED CLINICAL TRIAL. IS IT STILL SAFE TO DO SO?

For patients enrolled in cardiovascular-related clinical trials, please contact your UAB care team for information related to your specific clinical trial.

WHO CAN I TALK TO ABOUT QUESTIONS RELATED TO MY MEDICATIONS?

Our team is still here to answer any questions related to your cardiovascular care, including questions about your prescription medications or therapies. For assistance, please contact your care team directly at one of the numbers below.

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AS A CARDIOVASCULAR PATIENT OR FAMILY MEMBER, I AM FEELING DOWN, UNCERTAIN, AND STRESSED AS A RESULT OF THE PANDEMIC. WHAT CAN I DO TO GET SUPPORT AND KEEP MYSELF EMOTIONALLY WELL?

For some people, spiritual resources or faith can serve as a source of strength, support, and comfort. UAB Medicine Pastoral Care services are still available for your spiritual needs. Our dedicated Pastoral Care staff are offering several unique services during this time of social distancing and isolation. A prepared list of resources for meditation is located [here](#).

You may also email a prayer request to chaplains@uab.edu with "Prayer Request" in the subject line. Those who submit a prayer request will receive an email within 24 hours from one of our chaplains with a written prayer in response.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW COVID-19 MAY IMPACT MY CARDIOVASCULAR CONDITION AND TREATMENT?

For more information on UAB's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and your care at UAB, please visit uabmedicine.org/coronavirus.

We encourage you to stay updated on the latest COVID-19 news and recommendations from the CDC, which may be found [here](#).

For cardiovascular-specific resources and updates on the COVID-19 pandemic, we encourage you to visit the [American Heart Association website](#).