



May 7, 2020

Dear Members of the Community,

We here at Oneida Health are pleased to inform you that we are opening up all services so that you can once again, get on track for your health care. This includes all elective services, from Imaging, Laboratory, Primary and Specialty Care office visits, as well as Surgery and Endoscopy.

The Oneida Health Network has experienced a significant decline in routine disease management and preventative screenings as well as lower rates of Emergency Room visits for acute conditions such as heart attacks, strokes and other acute care illnesses. Understandably, many fear coming to a place where there are COVID-19 positive individuals. Please know that deferring essential care can pose greater health risks than the risks associated with contracting the virus itself.

Oneida Health, throughout its network of care, have implemented additional safety precautions to mitigate infection risks. These include:

- We have separated and isolated COVID-19 care and services.
- We have established and implemented clear screening and testing protocols throughout the network.
- We screen every individual for symptoms before entering the facility including taking their temperature.
- Test every person 3 days prior to their arrival for an elective procedure through our drive-thru testing program.
- We have adopted 100% masking among patients, providers and staff, ensuring our staff have the necessary protective equipment and supplies to keep everyone safe.
- We are continuously sanitizing all high touch areas in addition to our normal thorough cleaning and sanitizing process. This includes disinfecting chairs, door handles, elevator buttons, etc. throughout the day. All rooms and equipment are sanitized between patients.
- We have established social distancing precautions in waiting rooms, which are used infrequently due to our stay in your car program until we are ready to see you in your care area/exam room.
- In the hospital setting, including our ER, we have negative pressure rooms for potentially positive or positive COVID-19 patients to prevent air flow from leaving the care room. Additionally, ultra violet sterilization equipment is being used to supplement cleaning procedures. The UV lights provide additional sanitation in rooms that have been occupied by a patient with confirmed or potential COVID-19 and can disinfect areas that may be hard to reach by hand.

- Visitor restrictions also remain in place to limit the number of people actually in the offices and the hospital campus facilities. Certain exceptions to this restriction are made for minor patients, Obstetrical as well as developmentally disabled persons.

Our organization has taken significant steps to ensure the safety of all, including our staff, providers, patients and nursing home residents. Your safety and the safety of our caregivers is our top priority and our promise to you is that we will continue to take the necessary precautions to accomplish that.

Do not hesitate to seek the essential and necessary care you and your loved ones may need. We know that your health issues continue during this pandemic. Our offices and hospital are open for your care.

We here at Oneida Health extend a heartfelt thank you for your incredible support during this time. Your generous donations of personal protective equipment, financial support as well as food for our staff keep our spirits high.

Stay safe, please follow the guidelines and again, if you need care, please reach out to us. We are here for you.

Sincerely,

Gene F. Morreale
President and CEO