Information about Coronavirus (COVID-19) is updated regularly and our Oncology service is working with Alfred Health and Infectious Disease Experts to keep you up to date.

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What precautions should I take for my personal protection?**
Personal hygiene measures are the most important way to reduce the risk of infection. Good handwashing technique using soap and water is essential. Avoid touching your face and practice sneezing into your elbow. The use of masks in the community is not required as they provide minimal benefit over personal hygiene measures. Masks will be provided if clinically necessary and advised by Alfred Health and Victorian DHHS guidelines.

**Should I have the flu vaccinations?**
The Oncology service recommends flu vaccination for everyone when it becomes available in April to protect you in the coming winter flu season, however, this vaccination will not protect you against COVID-19.

**Should I have a contingency plan?**
Have a contingency plan in case of widespread disruptions or illness, where possible, ensure you have adequate supply of your usual medications. Please discuss this with your usual pharmacist as they will have up to date information in regards to your medications.

**Who should I contact if I have symptoms?**
If you are unwell with fever, cough or breathlessness and have come into contact with anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, please do not attend your outpatient appointment. Please contact us to discuss your symptoms and treatment plan. After hours, contact The Alfred on 03 9076 2000, who will provide advice depending on the severity of your illness. If it is a medical emergency, go to your nearest emergency department.

**Should I come to my radiation oncology clinic or treatment appointment?**

**Patients attending for daily treatment:**
Treatment will proceed as scheduled, however please contact us before coming in for your appointment if you are feeling unwell.

**Patients attending for a consultation:**
We may reschedule non-urgent appointments to a later date, or use telehealth (i.e. phone or video link consultation) to provide care. We will contact you if this occurs.
Your individual care continues to be our priority, so please contact us if you have any questions.

**Should I travel overseas?**
We recommend avoiding all non-essential travel. Information will constantly change, so keep updated via the Smart Traveller website. We suggest if you are planning to travel you contact your insurance provider.
What do I do if I need a medical letter for work/travel etc.?

We will be able to assist with a generic letter, but please allow up to 1 week for your letter to be sent to you. If you require an individualised letter or document/s, we recommend that you book an appointment with your GP to discuss your request.

What measures are Radiation Oncology additionally taking, to minimise COVID-19 risk to patients and staff?

You will be asked by Reception each day some standard questions about recent travel, contact with known COVID-19 cases and if you have any upper respiratory tract symptoms (similar to a cold or flu)
We have separated chairs in waiting rooms. Where chair separation has not been possible, you will see ‘Do not sit here’ signs on some chairs to maintain social distancing as much as possible.
We have removed magazines, books, toys, jigsaws, tea and coffee and snacks from the waiting rooms.
Only staff who are well will be providing your care. All staff are trained in hand hygiene and equipment cleaning for infection prevention.

What do we also request of our patients?

If you do find yourself unwell, please ring first before attending the hospital.
If you need to bring someone with you, limit this to one carer.
For patients who get changed, bring your own bag to put your clothes in.
Some baskets will still be available if you forget but please let staff know when you’ve finished for the day so we can give each basket a clean.
Please bring your own water bottle, however if you forget and need some water please ask reception for a cup.
If you have any concerns, please speak to a member of staff.

Thank you for your patience and understanding. We appreciate it’s a difficult time however we are doing everything we can to keep you safe and continue to provide our excellent service to you.

We will be updating information as it comes to hand so will keep you posted with any updates.

Thank you,

Staff and Management of Alfred Health Radiation Oncology