

Dear Valued Neighbor(s),

The Coronavirus is here and will continue to have an impact on the health system for the weeks and months to come.

Please read this email carefully, even if you are not a current patient of our office.

The Kalmar Family podiatry team is here to assist the wider community through this time. **We will remain open unless we are forced to close, or if we determine that conditions are too unsafe to stay open.** Plans have been put in place for continuity of patient care, and a number of scenarios planned for in case of Federal, State or Health Department directives which may come in the coming weeks and/or months.

Pain does not take a holiday and can increase with stress and anxiety. We have you covered.

The good news is that people attend our office because they are in pain, not because they are sick.

The current advice is that the risk of transmission of the Coronavirus is small when receiving podiatric treatment, provided all patients read the below advice and act upon it. We *all* have a role to play here.

I understand that some may be anxious about attending treatment, so I thought I would answer some questions you may have:

What have we done, and continue to Combat the Virus and keep Staff and Patients safe?

We are staying up to date with all the latest information via the WHO, CDC and peer-reviewed articles. We will do our best to relay information to patients via our social media pages, mainly [Facebook](#). We have a large stockpile of hospital grade antiseptic wipes, alcohol based sanitizer, cleaning products, and have put in place enhanced cleaning measures and processes for the health and safety of everyone within our clinic.

First and foremost, we are pre-screening all patients in our reminder calls and messages. Any patient or staff who feels sick in ANY way or has traveled in the last 2 weeks *anywhere* in the absence of symptoms is asked to reschedule, or stay home in regards to staff. We are not limiting the travel restrictions to just the highly affected areas, but to any travel on airplane or cruise. We have self-quarantined staff who traveled prior to corona "getting out of control" for 2 weeks. We are reducing Doctor and staff hours. Any staff that can work from home is asked to do so, and we set up measures to make that possible. So when you call in the near future, just know that some staff may be home answering your questions and it may take a little longer to get your call to the right staff member if they cannot help you. So please be patient.

On arrival we are asking all patients to place their cell phones in a sealed bag and keep it there for the remainder of their visit and wash their hands properly. Any paperwork needed to be completed is being done with a one-time use pen. We have augmented our waiting room to keep patients 6 feet apart, however patients are immediately taken to the treatment rooms. We are discouraging the use of the waiting room and separating patients' appointments to limit the amount of people in the office at one time. We are not double-booking any slots to limit the number of patients in the office at one time. Time for appointment is being increased from 15 min – 20 minutes to reduce traffic. ALL door knobs are wiped down after anyone touches them. Our front door is remaining open so there is no need to touch the front knob at all. All patients' insurance cards and credit cards are being packaged in a sealed bag and the cards are never touched by our staff. We have ordered a remote temperature sensor which we will start to use immediately upon arrival, and turn away anyone with a fever. We have removed all armrests from treatment chairs. We use disposable

barrier tape on all draw handles. We are stream-lining checkout. We will call all patients to book a follow up appointment and for payment to minimize time in the office and increase social distancing. On exit, we encourage hand-washing or Purel use. Patients who do not choose to follow the rules in place are asked to leave. This has yet to be an issue, and I do not see it becoming one. Our patients are amazing and it is our pleasure to serve you all.

I have advised my staff about their responsibilities both at the clinic and away from the clinic, to remain healthy. I have advised them that if they are in any way feeling unwell, to stay home.

The virus is most effectively combated by hand-washing with soap and water for 20 seconds as well as frequent cleaning of surfaces. This should be added to your routine immediately, as we have done and will continue to do. Check out our video on our Facebook page for the **proper** way to wash hands. The virus is surrounded by a layer of fat and breaks down with soap, detergents and alcohol-based solutions. With Purel, the hand needs to be completely soaked to do its job, so hand-washing is always preferred if available.

We have removed all but essential treatment items off of our shelves, desks and floors so that more efficient cleaning can occur on a more frequent basis.

I am not sure if I should attend treatment. What should I do?

We ask you to be upfront and honest about your travel history, and potential exposure, to ensure that all staff and patients (especially our elderly and immunocompromised patients) remain healthy. We will use our professional judgment to ensure the safety of our staff and other patients.

If you have travelled on a plane in the past 14 days please do not attend your appointment. This includes travel of any family member who you live with as well. If you exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 including, but not limited to: runny nose, fever, respiratory symptoms, and/or shortness of breath. Please seek medical advice, which may include getting tested for COVID-19. If you think you have the Corona virus, please CALL YOUR DOCTOR, HOSPITAL OR URGENT CARE AHEAD OF TIME! Do not show up without announcing your visit and concerns. Please let your health care team be aware and prepared to ensure everyone's safety.

If you have just arrived back from high risk areas such as China, Iran, South Korea or Italy, you should self-quarantine for 14 days, as is current Government Advice. Please refer to the CDC and WHO page for an ever-changing "high risk area list".

If you have had known close contact with a person with COVID-19, do not attend your appointment. Please self-isolate for 14 days as per Government Advice. If you start to show symptoms, please seek medical attention.

If you are feeling unwell in any way, please contact us for advice about whether you should attend your appointment. If you have a fever, cough, excessive runny nose or shortness of breath, then you will be advised to not attend your appointment.

In Conclusion...

We will continue to keep you informed during this uncertain time. Like us on [Facebook](#) where we will post tips, education, etc. to help us all stay informed and safe.

I am not a virologist or epidemiologist, so we are heeding the advice of the experts on what needs to

be done to be most helpful at this time. All of the above in this letter is from the advice of the experts. You should listen and act upon their advice too. Review the CDC and/or WHO website for any updates.

Please ask our staff any questions you may have about the Coronavirus, including ways to keep you and your family healthy in the upcoming months. We are here to help.

If you have any questions whatsoever, please email us at KalmarFamilyPodiatry@gmail.com or call us at 631-549-0955

Yours in Health,

Kalmar Family Podiatry
