



COVID-19: BEST PRACTICES^{1,2}

BEST PRACTICES FOR CLINICS

Limit how germs can enter the facility. Some suggestions include:

- Cancel elective procedures
- Use telemedicine when possible
- Limit points of entry and manage visitors
- Screen patients for respiratory symptoms
- Encourage patient respiratory hygiene using alternatives to facemasks

For sick patients, have patient enter through one door and immediately go into exam room.

For routine patients, encourage patient to do telemedicine visits to lessen exposure.

Waiting areas:

- Try to limit patient time in wait area to less than 5 minutes before he/she goes into exam room
- Have 2 different waiting areas “sick” and “well”
- Separate patients with respiratory symptoms so that they are not waiting among other patients seeking care. Identify a separate, well-ventilated space that allows waiting patients and visitors to be separated.
- Upon entering into the practice, ask the patient the following question (if yes to at least 3, send to testing):
 - Fever
 - Shortness of breath
 - Cough
 - Been around anyone who is sick
 - Travel outside normal area

Encourage patients to have **pharmacy delivery**.

TESTING SITES LINK

<https://gov.texas.gov/news/post/governor-a-bbott-tdem-dshs-announce-statewide-covid-19-test-collection-online-map>

RE-OPENING CLINICS

General considerations before making the decision to re-start in-person care:

- Evaluate the incidences and trends in your area and your patient demographic
- Evaluate the necessity of the care based on clinical need
- Have excellent patient screening processes
- Prioritize surgical/procedural care and high-complex chronic disease management
- Consider establishing Non-COVID-19 care zones (i.e. well and sick areas while maintaining with the 6-ft distancing ordinance)
- Practices with small waiting areas or those that are in buildings that they share with other businesses, have your patients wait in their vehicles
- Have sufficient resources available (PPE, healthy workforce, supplies, testing capacity, and post-acute care, without jeopardizing surges in capacity)

Personal Protective Equipment

- Providers and staff continue to wear facemasks at all times.
- Patients should wear a some kind of face covering, even well patients.
- Patients that are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms should have a N95 mask.
- Use re-useable PPE that can be reprocessed.
- Consider allowing the use of PPE beyond a single patient contact.

Workforce Availability

- Continue to monitor staff routinely for symptoms.
- Staff that are working in non-COVID zones should not rotate into COVID care zones.

Supplies

Adequate supplies, equipment, and medication must be ensured, and not detract from the ability to respond to potential surges. There should be areas of supplies sent up in both non-COVID Care and COVID care areas.