



## Goshen Health

March 18, 2020

Greetings,

I am thankful for this opportunity to address the Goshen community. During a time of much uncertainty, I hope my letter will provide some clarity on COVID-19 and its complexity.

While the name may be new to you, coronaviruses are not new to the medical community. COVID-19 is called a novel coronavirus because it is new: it has not been previously identified. It is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold.

Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and shortness of breath. These symptoms can be common this time of year. To understand how COVID-19 typically presents the symptoms are:

- Fever
- Sudden cough, typically a dry one, that won't go away
- Your shortness of breath is making it difficult to breathe

If you are experiencing any of the symptoms above, please call your doctor promptly. They will determine if you have signs and symptoms of COVID-19 and whether you should be tested. It is necessary to call ahead to your doctor's office before seeking medical care to ensure your safety, as well as those around you. This includes our healthcare workers. While this virus continues to spread, it is imperative that we have all medical personnel available to care for those in need. Even if you aren't having these specific symptoms, but you are feeling sick, please stay home. Do not go to work or go out in public.

Everyone has an important role in preventing the spread of illness. Practice good hygiene – wash your hands often, sneeze or cough into a tissue or inside of your elbow and disinfect surfaces frequently. The CDC does not recommend that people who are healthy wear a facemask. Facemasks should be worn by people who have respiratory illnesses to prevent spreading illness to others. There is a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE) around the world. If the public unnecessarily uses them, there will not be enough for our healthcare workers to properly care for COVID-19 and other patients needing these types of precautions.

Take social distancing seriously. If you are an older person or have a serious underlying health condition, stay home and away from other people. Work or engage in schooling from home whenever possible and avoid social gatherings in groups of more than 10 people.

In closing, rest assured that Goshen Health is positioned to provide exceptional care for all patients. We are doing everything we can to make our environment as safe as possible for our patients, community and Colleagues. You can also refer to [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) for the most up-to-date information.

Sincerely,

Daniel A. Nafziger, MD, MS  
Goshen Hospital Chief Medical Officer