

Precautions Taken To Ensure Health And Safety Of My Patients

The health and safety of my patients is my top priority.

As always, it is required to practice the CDC recommended cleaning and safety protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses. I encourage everyone to take the necessary precautions to stay healthy and help me maintain a safe environment for my patients. While I remain vigilant in taking these necessary measures, I also strongly recommend to my patients to continue telehealth sessions (unless I deem an in-person office session necessary) as a method to practice social distancing while still receiving the necessary care, as determined by the guidelines implemented by Governor Murphy and the CDC.

Let me share with you everything I am doing, as well as what you can do, to ensure your health and safety so that you can feel safe and confident about receiving your psychiatric care in the office.

These are the steps I am taking to help prevent infection and the spread of the virus:

- All patients are screened prior to making an in-person appointment in order to make sure they have not been exposed to COVID-19 and to make sure they are **not exhibiting symptoms** (including, but not limited to, fever; cough; runny nose; shortness of breath; or difficulty breathing).
- **If a patient presents with respiratory/COVID-19 symptoms** at my office, he/she **will be advised to return home and contact his/her healthcare provider** for medical advice and management; he/she can then have a telepsychiatry appointment instead of the in-person psychiatric appointment.
- **Only patients are allowed in the treatment area (my office).** If a patient requires assistance or transportation, or is a minor, the additional party will be asked to wait in the lobby while the session is being conducted with the patient. Then, **the parent or guardian (in the case of a minor)** will come into the office **alone** for the remainder of the appointment if needed.
- **Only one person will be seen in the office at a given time** for NO LONGER THAN THEIR ALLOTTED APPOINTMENT TIME.

- I am wearing a mask for appointments with all patients.
- I am social distancing with each patient and party by maintaining a distance of at least 6 feet apart.
- Before and after each patient encounter, I am washing my hands with soap and water, or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- I am cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched areas and surfaces in both the office and the lobby before and after each patient.
- I am cleaning my hands after I cough or sneeze.
- I am using a Hepa filter with UV protection in my office.

During this time, I am asking for your help in maintaining a safe environment for all of us:

- Upon entering the building and office, **please wash your hands or use a hand sanitizer** (provided in both the lobby and in the office).
- **Wear a facemask in the building.** You are required to wear a face mask in order to receive in-person psychiatric care. If you have forgotten to bring one, I have disposable face masks available in my office if needed. If you refuse to wear a face mask, an in-person appointment will not be conducted, and you will have to schedule a telehealth appointment.
- You are required to **maintain at least a 6-foot distance** from others in the building and in my office.
- When coughing and/or sneezing, cover your mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue, and then discard the tissue immediately into a trash bin. If someone around you is sneezing and/or coughing, please clean your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- If you are **exhibiting any possible respiratory/COVID-19 symptoms** (including, but not limited to, cough, runny nose, fever, chills, shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing) **an in-person appointment will not be held**, and you must reschedule your appointment or conduct a telehealth appointment.
- If you have a fever please refrain from coming to the office until you have been **fever-free for at least 72 hours**; you will be kindly asked to leave the building, and instructed to follow up with your medical provider for management/treatment.
- **Please leave the office and building immediately following** the conclusion of the appointment.

More information about the coronavirus (COVID-19) can be found on the CDC website: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html.

Thank you for your understanding regarding the above.

Sincerely,

Nicole Hraniotis, M.D.