

Seek care in a medical emergency even amid COVID-19

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As stay-at-home orders are lifted and a variety of services become available again, in Central Florida and across the U.S., families and individuals may still be hesitant to seek medical care, even when experiencing a health emergency. Nationwide, doctors are urging individuals who may have symptoms of a medical emergency to immediately act and are reminding residents that hospitals and emergency rooms remain a safe place to seek care.

Rest assured that Poinciana Medical Center, along with HCA Healthcare hospitals across the nation, have implemented robust safety procedures to ensure the protection of our patients and care teams as we continue to provide timely and quality healthcare to all patients, including those needing medical assistance unrelated to COVID-19.

When deciding whether a medical issue is an “emergency” amid COVID-19, consider the severity of the issue at hand. Symptoms such as loss of consciousness, chest pain, signs of stroke, seizure, breathing problems and severe allergic reaction should never be ignored. Unexplained nausea, vomiting and uncontrollable bleeding, as well as vaginal bleeding during pregnancy, are also serious health concerns that should be addressed without delay. With more individuals confined to their homes, cooking, grilling and outdoor activities like bike riding and yard work are on the rise. These activities can result in related health emergencies including burns, broken bones, head injuries and traumatic injuries, which all require immediate medical care.

If you’ve recognized that your medical issue requires emergency care, avoid driving yourself to the ER, particularly if you’ve regained consciousness after passing out, are experiencing stroke symptoms or have any chest pain. If a family member, friend or neighbor is not available to get you to a hospital quickly, or if you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, dial 911.

At HCA Healthcare hospitals, medical professionals are trained to implement infectious disease protocols, including rigorous cleaning and sanitization throughout the day, as well as separating suspected and positive COVID patients from other patients in need of care. We’ve also implemented COVID-19-specific procedures including universal masking, telehealth services, restricted visitation and health screenings for all patients, visitors and medical staff entering the facility. By expanding technologies and protocols in this way, we can continue to ensure the health and safety of all who visit our hospitals.

Additionally, as we continue to monitor the dynamic shifts of the COVID-19 pandemic, HCA Healthcare hospitals including ours are now beginning to thoughtfully re-introduce surgeries or procedures that were deferred or canceled during the initial pandemic response phase. In order to protect our patients and our caregivers, we are working with physicians regarding their pre-admission process and testing plans for surgical procedures. Our access to resources – and our commitment to safety protocols – has uniquely prepared our hospitals to reintroduce these services.

While it's true we're in the middle of a global health crisis, talking with a healthcare provider about health concerns should never be delayed. Putting off health issues today may have serious consequences tomorrow. When it comes to medical emergencies, trust your instincts and have confidence that your local hospital is a safe place to seek care.