

A Message From

Health Pavilion Administration

Wednesday, March 13, 2024

COVID-19 Protocol Update

Sonja Donlin, Health Care Administrator

Hello, Oak Hammock residents and staff.

On March 1, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued some updated guidance regarding COVID-19 protocols, and we would like to share the newest information with you.

In summary, the CDC is advising that people respond to COVID-19 as any other respiratory illness returning to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, symptoms are improving overall, and any fever has been gone for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication.

Another update encourages people 65 and over to obtain a COVID-19 vaccination twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring.

CDC guidance has not changed for assisted living or skilled nursing facilities. Therefore, we will continue to follow current infection control protocols in the Health Pavilion. In addition to federal and state guidelines, we rely on our infection control specialists on staff to ensure the safest practices for our residents and team members. When respiratory illness is present among our residents or team members in the Health Pavilion, we may recommend that staff, visitors and vendors wear a well-fitted mask while inside the Health Pavilion buildings.

As of today, we have one confirmed case of COVID-19 among a Skilled Nursing resident, therefore, we *are* recommending mask usage while in the Health Pavilion. The SN case is the only case we are aware of among residents or staff at this time.

For your convenience, here is an excerpt from the CDC's most recent update:

“The new guidance brings a unified approach to addressing risks from a range of common respiratory viral illnesses, such as COVID-19, flu, and RSV, which can cause significant health impacts and strain on hospitals and health care workers. CDC is making updates to the recommendations now because the U.S. is seeing far fewer hospitalizations and deaths associated with COVID-19 and because we have more tools than ever to combat flu, COVID, and RSV.”

“When people get sick with a respiratory virus, the updated guidance recommends that they stay home and away from others. For people with COVID-19 and influenza, treatment is available and can lessen symptoms and lower the risk of severe illness. The recommendations suggest returning to normal activities when, for at least 24 hours, symptoms are improving overall, and if a fever was present, it has been gone without use of a fever-reducing medication.

“Once people resume normal activities, they are encouraged to take additional prevention strategies for the next 5 days to curb disease spread, such as taking more steps for cleaner air, enhancing hygiene practices, wearing a well-fitting mask, keeping a distance from others, and/or getting tested for respiratory viruses. Enhanced precautions are especially important to protect those most at risk for severe illness, including those over 65 and people with weakened immune systems. CDC’s updated guidance reflects how the circumstances around COVID-19 in particular have changed. While it remains a threat, today it is far less likely to cause severe illness because of widespread immunity and improved tools to prevent and treat the disease. Importantly, states and countries that have already adjusted recommended isolation times have not seen increased hospitalizations or deaths related to COVID-19.

“While every respiratory virus does not act the same, adopting a unified approach to limiting disease spread makes recommendations easier to follow and thus more likely to be adopted and does not rely on individuals to test for illness, a practice that data indicates is uneven.”

We have updated the Oak Hammock Independent Living Resident Protocols for Respiratory Illnesses packet on Touchtown, and we have attached a copy of those protocols to this email.

You can find the full March 1 announcement from the CDC here:

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2024/p0301-respiratory-virus.html>.

You can find more information about COVID-19 online at: <https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/index.html>.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Quality Improvement Manager Calvin Reynek, IP-BC, AS-BC, CDP, CADDCT, QAPI-BC at creynek@oakhammock.org or 352-548-1135.

Thank you,

Sonja Donlin

Sonja Donlin, RN, BSN, NHA, RAC-CT, WCC, CLNC
Health Care Administrator, Oak Hammock at the University of Florida