

We need your help!

Northeast Ohio is experiencing a critical surge of patients in our healthcare facilities, with hospitals, emergency departments and urgent care centers all seeing high numbers of patients. Our hospitals stand ready to care for patients, however we are facing a shortage of available inpatient beds and significantly longer than usual wait times for emergency and urgent care.

There are several factors leading to this situation, most notably the rising number of people with COVID-19 who have a higher degree of illness than we have seen previously and are requiring hospitalization. Unfortunately, models show the number is expected to continue to grow.

What you can do to help!

- Get vaccinated. Find a vaccination site at vaccines.gov
- For mild, routine healthcare needs, consider seeking care from:
 - Your local healthcare provider
 - Telehealth services
 - Pharmacy-based clinics
- If you have mild COVID symptoms, consider calling one of the healthcare providers above, before seeking care in person or at an emergency department
- If you have concerns about exposure but aren't experiencing symptoms, or need proof that you don't have COVID for travel requirements or event access, find testing sites near you at coronavirus.ohio.gov/testing
- Consider not seeking testing at an emergency department if you have mild or no symptoms
- Wear a mask if indoors or in large gatherings, even if you are fully vaccinated
- Social distance when possible and avoid large crowds
- Practice frequent hand washing

We need your help to ensure we continue to have the resources and staff to care for our community. Unless your COVID-19 symptoms are worsening or life-threatening, you have better care options that can help us stay focused on delivering advanced care to those who need it most.

Again, the most effective strategy to keep caregivers, hospitals, health systems and our community safe, is **becoming fully vaccinated, wearing a mask and maintaining social distancing**. We have the tools to overcome this monumental challenge and we need your help to protect yourself and your loved ones. Help us change the trajectory of COVID-19 for our communities.

Please help us by seeking the right care, at the right place, at the right time.

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* Circumstances differ for children in need of care in our communities. These recommendations are not universally applicable to children. For more information, please visit: <https://www.akronchildrens.org/pages/2019-Novel-Coronavirus-Frequently-Asked-Questions.html>