



July 5, 2020

Dear PANS Families –

We hope you enjoyed a safe and fun holiday weekend!

We know many of you have questions about **how to keep your family safe** as Illinois continues to reopen – especially as we watch COVID rates increase in many areas of the country. Each family will have a different assessment of their own risk tolerance but, no matter who you are, the following habits will decrease your risk of infection:

- Use **face-coverings** and maintain **physical distance of 6 feet** in public
- If you do gather with loved ones, do so **outside** (and continue to mask and keep your distance)
- **Wash or sanitize your hands** frequently and carefully

**You should avoid:**

- Sharing food, having potlucks, or eating at a buffet with people outside your household
- Shouting, talking loudly, and singing (keeping gatherings small and not playing loud music will prevent people feeling the need to speak more loudly)

If you are considering sending kids to in-person activities, we recommend you check in with the facility to ensure they are following IDPH and CDC guidelines for infection prevention.

We've also received questions about **COVID testing** from families and we want to review our current recommendations and procedures.

- **SYMPTOMATIC PATIENTS** (those who are ill and have COVID-compatible symptoms): Please call us for an assessment and we will arrange evaluation and COVID PCR testing when indicated.
- **ASYMPTOMATIC PATIENTS** (those who do NOT have symptoms but want testing performed): At this time, we cannot perform COVID testing for asymptomatic individuals in our office due to limited testing supplies. Regardless of symptoms, anyone can have testing performed at State of Illinois testing sites <https://www.dph.illinois.gov/testing>. Some patients can be tested at commercial locations (check for age or other restrictions).
- **ANTIBODY TESTING:** CDC and Lurie Children's Hospital experts recommend we perform antibody testing when the results will benefit the medical care of a patient (e.g. when a patient has COVID-compatible symptoms, has already been ill for at least 1 week and their PCR test is negative). Antibody testing does NOT convey reliable information about an individual's immunity to SARS-COV2 or protection from future infection.
- **If you/your child tests positive for COVID**, please notify our practice so that we can guide your family through the course of the illness, keep other members of your family safe, and monitor for more severe illness.

In the office, **the safety of our patients, families, and staff remains our highest priority**. We continue to care for our patients and families safely – providing routine physicals, completing school and athletics screening, giving immunizations, and caring for patients' emotional and learning needs. Please check our website's COVID page [www.pansdocs.com/covidupdates](http://www.pansdocs.com/covidupdates) for answers to FAQs.

Please reach out to us with any questions you have. We are here to help your family thrive even in these challenging times.

Sincerely,

Trish Brunner, MD, Shoshana E Waskow, MD, and Bilkis Hirani, MD