

Patient Scheduler Script: APPENDIX A

Hello. I am calling from the scheduling team for Dr. XX. We appreciate how challenging this time has been and that waiting for surgery/procedure can be stressful. We are now ready to begin the scheduling process for your surgery/procedure and I would like to go through some information about the process with you. Is this a good time to do that? (you may want to get a pen and paper to take some notes)

Please be assured that we have robust safety measures in place to ensure your safety and the safety of our staff during this COVID-19 pandemic. I am going to explain some of the procedures we will use to keep you safe, what you will need to do, and what you can expect.

The date we are able to offer you is XX at XX. Will this date and time work for you? Because we are limiting the number of procedures to ensure we adhere to our safety protocols, this is the only date, time and location available at this time.

To keep you safe, there are some specific procedures and policies we have added to our normal surgery/procedure preparation. I am going to explain our testing policy, what you need to do leading up to surgery/procedure, and I will also explain our visitor policy.

1. The first new safety procedure is that I need to ask you about any symptoms of COVID-19 and you must be tested for COVID-19 infection 72-hours prior to the date of your surgery.
 - a. Have you already been tested for COVID-19? (If yes follow workflow)
 - b. Do you have any of the following symptoms?
 - i. Asks if patient have any of these new symptoms:
 1. Fever \geq 100 degrees
 2. Cough, Congestion, Sore throat, Runny nose, Shortness of breath
 3. Muscle aches with flu like symptoms, Loss/decrease taste or smell
 4. Chills or shaking chills, headache, diarrhea, nausea, decreased appetite, or any GI symptoms
 5. Contact with a person quarantined or confirmed with COVID-19
2. You will need to be tested for COVID-19 on X.
 - We have provided this testing date because it is [within 72 hours] of your scheduled procedure. If you miss this testing time it may impact your ability to proceed with your scheduled procedure. Immediately following your test and continuing to the date of your surgery, you must quarantine in your home and isolate yourself from others within your home. You should try to stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. If interaction is necessary, maintain six feet from other household members. You should not go to work, school, or public areas during this time. Will you be able to do this?

- Your COVID-19 test can be completed on X at NorthShore’s drive-through testing facility, located at 9977 Woods Drive in Skokie. The typical hours of operation are Monday-Saturday 8:30am-4:30pm and Sunday 10:00am-2:00pm, but we encourage you to visit www.northshore.org/drive-through for updates to the hours of operation before visiting the site. You will need to bring photo identification with you. Please be advised that there may be a wait and that the hours of operation are subject to change. I will help set you up for the test and tell you what to expect.
 - As you are active on NSC, a message indicating you are eligible for testing will be sent to your NSC Inbox/Message Center. When you arrive on site please be prepared to show this message on your mobile device (you can download the NSC app from the Apple App Store or Google Play) or bring a printed copy of the message to the drive-through testing facility.
 - Signing up for NSC will make this process easier and more efficient for you and our team. I can help you get registered now.
 - As you are now signed up for NSC, a message indicating you are eligible for testing will be sent to your NSC Inbox/Message Center. When you arrive to the drive-through testing facility, please be prepared to show this message on your mobile device (you can download the NSC app from the Apple App Store or Google Play) or bring a printed copy of the message to the drive-through testing facility.
 - Since you do not wish to sign-up for NSC, upon arrival to the drive-through testing facility please inform the staff that you are there for pre-surgical testing. The drive-through staff will verify this information in our Electronic Medical Record prior to testing.
 - Upon arrival, follow the directional signs and staff instructions and do not exit your car.
 - The testing process involves staff inserting a swab into your nose and/or throat
 - You will receive results via NorthShore Connect or phone call in approximately 1-2 days
 - Do you have any questions about the COVID-19 testing?
3. *We also still need pre-operative clearance within 30 days of your surgical date*
- o *It looks like your previous pre-op clearance is still valid so you’re all set*
 - o *It looks like your previous pre-op clearance is outside of the 30-day window. We will need to get you set up with a visit with your PCP to re-obtain this clearance and ensure you are safe to proceed with surgery. This may be done over the phone or using video.*
4. Please know that there will be additional steps taken for your safety when you come to the hospital for your procedure:
- a. Please wear a face covering upon arrival to the hospital. All staff will be wearing masks for your protection as well.

- b. Prior to entering the hospital your temperature will be checked and you will need to answer several COVID-19 screening questions again.
 - c. To keep everyone safe, we have altered our visitor policy for the time being.
 - Due to the COVID-19 emergency, for the safety of you, other patients, and our team, we are not able to allow anyone to accompany you inside the hospital for your surgery. Please arrange for someone to bring you to the hospital and pick you up, however you cannot have a visitor come into the hospital or wait for you inside during your surgery. We apologize for this inconvenience; however, we have put this measure in place to ensure everyone's safety. Do you have any questions about visitors?
5. I need to make sure you are aware that there is a possibility that our plan for your surgery could change. We are operating within guidelines from the Illinois Department of Public Health and Governor Pritzker regarding safe circumstances to perform surgeries. If circumstances change, there may be a need to change your date and time again. I just want you to know this ahead of time so you can prepare. Any future change to this plan would be done for your safety. Do you have any other questions?

FAQ

1. Is it safe to come to NS for my care?
 - a. Yes, we have been taking care of non-COVID-19 patients throughout this crisis. We separated COVID-19 positive patients from all other patients at our NorthShore facilities. We are screening all employees as they enter our hospitals.
 - b. Our non-COVID-19 treatment/services have continued, safely delivering over 450 babies and performing urgent surgeries during this time
 - c. We follow all CDC and IDPH guidelines
 - d. Rigorous screening of patients and employees (with testing whenever indicated) – we screen for symptoms and perform temperature screening.
 - e. Hand Hygiene: rigorous adherence to hand hygiene at all times
 - f. Personal protective equipment:
 - i. All staff interacting with patients will wear face masks and eye shields; where appropriate, additional protective equipment is also used. NorthShore has adequate PPE to meet all CDC recommendations
 - ii. All patients are required to wear a face covering when entering a facility. If they don't have their own, we will provide one
 - g. Shift of all appropriate care to telehealth to reduce need for patients come in.
 - h. Visitor and guest policies changed to reduce people in our facilities.
 - i. Appropriate social distancing practices
 - i. Reduced patient volumes due to enhanced telehealth capabilities
 - ii. Staggered appointment times
 - iii. Reduced schedules to limit number of patients in an office at any time
 - iv. Spaced seating and check in to ensure adequate distancing (6ft)
 - v. On-line check in to reduce time and people in line
 - j. Thorough cleaning and disinfection procedures that meet all CDC/IDPH guidelines for COVID-19
 - k. Curbside/ drive-up services where appropriate

2. The patient has already had a COVID-19 test outside of NS
 - a. A COVID-19 test must be done no more than 72 hours before surgery/procedures according to the Illinois Department of Health unless it was positive (see next question)
3. Can I get a test outside of NorthShore?
 - a. No, all patients having surgery or a procedure at NS need to complete their COVID-19 testing at NS.
4. What if my surgery/procedure was moved what should I do? What if I have to come back for another procedure/surgery within 14 days?
 - a. Instruct the patient to remain quarantined at home until their new date/next surgery/procedure date unless they develop symptoms. If they develop symptoms they should call their physicians office. If their test has been more than 14 days from their scheduled surgery/procedure date the patient should call their physicians office.
5. The patient had COVID-19 diagnosed already
 - a. Do you have any of the following symptoms?
 - i. Fever \geq 100 degrees
 - ii. Cough, Congestion, Sore throat, Runny nose, Shortness of breath
 - iii. Muscle aches with flu like symptoms, Loss/decrease taste or smell
 - iv. Chills or shaking chills, headache, diarrhea, nausea, decreased appetite, or any GI symptoms
 - v. Contact with a person quarantined or confirmed with COVID-19
 - b. If they are 14 days out from testing and symptom free they do not need a repeat test but must quarantine for 72 hours prior to surgery/procedure
 - c. If they have symptoms they need to get tested again 72 hours before surgery/procedure
6. What if I test positive for COVID-19?
 - a. A member of our infection control team will call you and provide you will instructions. Your physician will advise you on if your surgery/procedure can proceed.
7. If you do not have a car for drive through testing?
 - a. Please have someone drive you to the testing center. (If the patient does not have this ability contact your manager)
8. What if I am admitted to the hospital, can I have family visit me?
 - a. We understand your concern about wanting to be with loved ones during this challenging time. NorthShore has implemented a visitor restriction policy. This action is being taken for the health, safety and well-being of our patients and staff. Please read our current visitor policy information letter. Additionally, to help patients and their loved ones connect, we encourage the use of phone-based video capabilities such as FaceTime and What's App.
(<https://www.northshore.org/globalassets/healthy-you/blog/2020/covid-19/covid-19-visitor-restrictions-04142020.pdf>)