

RECOMMENDATIONS TO PATIENTS ON THE SAFE USE OF GENERAL PRACTICE DURING PANDEMIC

Society of General Practice of the Czech Medical Association JEP

SGP is the most numerous organizational unit of the Czech Medical Society JEP. It brings together more than 5,100 general practitioners in the Czech Republic. The mission of SGP is to spread ethical and professional medical standards and lead physicians to provide the highest quality patient-oriented care.

The current situation regarding the Covid-19 pandemic calls for emergency measures. In an effort to ensure the highest quality and scope of GP care in GP practices, while maintaining maximum safety for patients and healthcare professionals, **we issue the following recommendation for GP patients**, which is in line with the national Covid-19 pandemic strategy:

Take the utmost care of your health in order to reduce the need for doctor's visits.

Follow all recommended anti-epidemic measures. Follow the rules for diet, lifestyle, and regular taking of recommended medications. Follow your doctor's instructions to check your body weight, blood pressure if you are being treated for hypertension, or your blood sugar if you have diabetes.

Especially if you suffer from chronic diseases of the heart, blood vessels, lungs, or kidneys, or you are over 65 years of age, order vaccination against influenza and pneumococcus.

In times of increased incidence of upper respiratory tract infections, limit unnecessary doctor visits. Such a period is just coming. To a large extent, we can provide you with services electronically (e-recipes, e-sick days). In the future, we anticipate the growing use of other communication technologies (video consulting).

Always book to see your GP. In principle, do not go to a doctor with symptoms of upper respiratory infection without ordering.

If you are ordered to see a doctor, always **enter the surgery only with a mask, disinfect your hands** when entering and leaving. **Keep distances** in the waiting room to other patients. Follow the instructions of the medical staff.

Take an interest in **flu vaccinations** and follow the organizational instructions of the surgery staff.

If you experience symptoms of an acute upper respiratory tract infection, such as fever, weakness, fatigue, headache, sore throat and muscle aches, runny nose, cough, taste and smell disorders, **start home isolation** and self-medication: calm down, drink plenty of fluids, and eventual administration of drugs for fever and pain (paracetamol, ibuprofen). This treatment will resolve most cases within a few days. Keep contact with other people to a minimum during symptoms.

Contact your registering GP by telephone or electronically if they have agreed to decide on the next step.

If you need a sick day certificate for work, it can be issued from the surgery in remote mode, but no later than 3 days retroactively.

Contact your registering GP by phone as well without delay

- if you have the problems described above and have been in contact with a person who has currently been diagnosed with Covid-19 or is in quarantine
- if you experience any of the warning symptoms, such as shortness of breath (subjectively perceived shortness of breath / shortness of breath, such as inability to breathe properly), high fever above 38.5 degrees, which does not go away after administration of paracetamol or ibuprofen or confusion/collapse
- if you have symptoms of an acute upper respiratory tract infection and are at increased risk; you are over 65 years of age, you have chronic heart, lung or kidney disease, diabetes or a treated immune disorder.

In these cases, the practitioner will decide on the indication for testing for Covid-19 infection by RT- PCR and on the next steps.

The request for a Covid-19 testing is issued by a general practitioner (possibly the hygienic service) electronically and they need the following information from the patient: when the first symptoms occurred, what they were, what their highest temperature was. The application is not issued in paper form. Once completed, it is automatically available to staff at all official collection points. The patient must remain in isolation until the test result is reported.

Also, if the clinical condition of a patient with a chronic disease unrelated to an upper respiratory tract infection worsens at home, consult your GP. They can use knowledge of their patients and propose the optimal solution based on telephone contact.

If a doctor's home visit is necessary, all members of the household should wear a mask and use disinfectant.

If you have any serious problem, whether physical or mental, please do not hesitate to call a GP. Due to fear of Covid-19 infection, do not neglect the symptoms of other diseases! Early diagnosis and treatment can be essential for your health.

In case of a serious condition, when the general practitioner is unavailable, call emergency (tel. number 155).