



DERMATOLOGY  
ASSOCIATES OF ITHACA  
*Healthier Skin Since 1983*

May 1, 2020

Dear Patients,

We trust you are well and staying safe. It is remarkable how much our world has changed in the past six weeks, and how while socially distancing, our shared goal of keeping each other healthy has brought us together more than ever. With so much information to keep up with on a daily basis, we hope you are taking the time you need to care for yourself and to maintain good skin health.

As Central New York looks forward to reopening and elective hospital procedures resume, please know that our team here in the office is ready as ever to provide excellent care for you. In addition to offering Virtual Visits, we provide in-person care via our well-received socially distanced office visits where every precaution is taken to protect your health and safety (including pre-screening, temperature checks, and hand sanitization of all prior to entry; car check-in; universal masking of all patients, visitors, and staff; frequent disinfection of all surfaces; and an individualized experience for each patient at a time—full protocol available below).

Please feel free to call (607-257-1107) or email ([admin@ithacaderm.com](mailto:admin@ithacaderm.com)) anytime. We are grateful for your trust and honored to serve our community now as always!

Warmly and with well wishes,

Dr. McAllister and Your Team at Dermatology Associates of Ithaca

## **COVID-19 Safe Office Protocol May 1, 2020—Updated Weekly**

### **Pre-Appointment Screening**

- 1) All patients who can be seen via Telederm should be offered a Telederm appointment
- 2) Phone reminders: Instruct patient to call to reschedule if they or any of their contacts have traveled outside of the immediate Central New York area in the past 14 days or has gathered with anyone outside of their immediate household members, or have symptoms of fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, body or muscle aches, headaches, or new loss of taste or smell; or if they or any of their contacts have been quarantined or have had contact with someone who has been quarantined due to COVID-19.
- 3) Pre Check-in Phone Calls: Call the day before in-person appointment to orient patients to our new Car Check-in process; policy limiting visitors to none for adults and one for children or dependent adults; and that patients and visitors all must wear face coverings; Safe Entry procedure; and to update information and paperwork including New Patient Paperwork for New Patients and Established patients not seen within the past 3 years)

### **Doors**

As much as possible, all doors including front door to be opened for patient by Admins, Roomer, or Medical Assistant upon entry, entering and exiting Exam or Surgical Room, and exiting office, so that no handles are touched by patients or visitors. Anything that is touched is to be wiped down with an antiviral wipe.

### **Appointment Check-In**

- 1) Sign on Door reminds patients not to enter if they are ill or have any symptoms of fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, body or muscle aches, headaches, or new loss of taste or smell
- 2) All doors locked
- 3) Car Check-in:
  - i. Patients call our number
  - ii. Admin reviews screening questions for COVID-19: whether patient (or visitor, if present) or any of their contacts has traveled outside of the immediate Central New York area in the past 14 days or has gathered with anyone outside of their immediate household members, or has symptoms of fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, body or muscle aches, headaches, or new loss of taste or smell; or if they or any of their contacts have been quarantined or have had contact with someone who has been quarantined due to COVID-19
    - a) If patient answers yes, please schedule for Telederm (depending on provider availability, can provide service while patient is still in car)
    - b) If all answers are no, may proceed through check-in process
  - iii. Obtain insurance card information; verbal consents for treatment, billing, and HIPAA; obtain copay; and complete other check-in tasks over the phone (most should have been done during the Pre Check-in Phone Call). Patient advised we will call their cell phone as their room is ready. If patient does not have a phone available or did not come in a car, Admin to greet them at the door, let them know we will be right with them, immediately tell Roomer, and Roomer brings patient into Exam or Surgery Room where check-in process is carried out.

### **Rooming**

- 1) Roomer to call patient's cell phone once room is ready, use antiviral wipe to open doors for patient coming in (and leaving, if Roomer is present then) so no handles are

touched

2) Shoe Scrub Prior to Entry: All patients and visitors to have shoes scrubbed on disinfectant mat before entering office. Roomer to keep this mat sprayed with antiviral disinfectant.

3) Safe Entry procedure: Patient (and visitor, if applicable) to be given face mask (see Face Mask Script), have temperature taken to ensure it is below 100.4°F, and to be given squirt of hand sanitizer before entry into office

- Face Mask Script: "Please apply mask by only touching the ear loops, make sure the blue side is out and the bright white strip is at the top. Apply to cover nose and mouth, and pinch the top around your nose!"

4) Roomer to escort patient to their room

5) Roomer to complete rooming processes and notify Assistant and Provider that patient is ready and let them know which room they are in

### **Appointment Check-Out**

1) Assistant to check patient out and schedule follow up appointment while patient is still in the room.

2) If patient purchases an in-office prescription or product, Assistant to convey credit card to Check-Out Admin on a piece of clean gauze without touching credit card, complete documentation while Check-Out Admin charges the purchase to the credit card without touching the credit card, Assistant to bring credit card on gauze and product back to patient in room. Card is not touched. All receipts are emailed if desired.

3) Assistant to open doors for patient and use antiviral wipes for any touched surfaces

### **Room Turnover**

1) Between patients, wipe all door handles, counters, faucets, exam tables, chairs, and anything that was touched

2) Any item that has been used in the care of a patient, including pens, clipboards, iPads, Dermalites, cameras, and rulers, must be disinfected before it leaves the exam room

3) Wash hands after touching patient or patient's belongings, before going into room, and after leaving room

### **Staff Infection Control**

1) Continuous self-monitoring and monitoring of contacts for symptoms including symptoms of fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, body or muscle aches, headaches, or new loss of taste or smell, and let Office Manager know if symptoms develop in self or contacts.

2) All team members to refrain from touching face including eyes, nose, mouth; practice respiratory hygiene including performing hand hygiene after having contact with respiratory secretions and contaminated objects/materials; avoid sick contacts; frequently wash hands thoroughly with soap and water and disinfect with hand sanitizer

3) No travel outside of a 100-mile radius of Ithaca

4) Provider white coats to be washed weekly

5) If staff have been quarantined or have had contact with someone who has been quarantined due to COVID-19, they need to let the Office Manager know and to complete their quarantine

6) Safe Entry Protocol

i. Change to indoor shoes as soon as entering office. Outdoor shoes must stay on the rugs. Only indoor shoes may touch the interior tile. Indoor shoes to be sprayed with disinfectant at the end of the day and stored in the hanging shoe rack.

ii. Wash hands with soap and water in Lab sink before touching anything in office

iii. Take and record temperature at beginning of every shift to ensure it is below 100.4°F

iii. Face Mask to be worn at all times while in office except for when eating and drinking. Perform hand hygiene before and after touching any portion of the mask.

iv. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after every patient and before and after touching keyboards and phones and any common items

#### 7) Social Distancing

i. Stay 6 feet away from others at all times, except as needed when examining patients in exam room. No handshakes or hugs.

ii. Avoid all gatherings except household members

iii. Face masks, hand hygiene, and social distancing recommended whenever in public

#### 8) No shared food

9) All long hair to be tied back, minimize or eliminate jewelry, wear simple attire that stays out of sterile field

10) Clean and sanitize desk, phone, keyboard regularly throughout the day

11) Close toilet lid prior to flushing to prevent aerosols

### **PPE Conservation Protocol**

1) Reuse face masks that remain clean by the end of the day, storing them in a way that does not contaminate them. Wash or sanitize hands before removal, then remove without touching the face mask part and only touching the earloop parts, fold the outside portion of the mask on itself, set it somewhere clean where it will remain untouched, and then wash or sanitize hands again.

2) We have donated PPE to both local hospital systems: isolation gowns and face masks

### **Visitors to Office**

1) No drug representatives in the office; they may call or email

2) No visitors to office except one visitor allowed with each child or dependent adult patient

### **Deliveries to Office**

1) All mail including packages to be quarantined for 24 hours before being opened. Discard outer envelopes, then wash hands with soap and water immediately after opening the previous day's mail.

2) At noon, hold mail tray outside for mailman so there is touchless delivery. Once new mail has been deposited, bring inside and do not touch for 24 hours.

3) Packages to be left on back loading dock and staff to bring inside for 24 hour quarantine in Lab. No signatures.

4) Delivery person for specimens waits outside, reaches in door to scan code, box is handed to delivery person by staff, there is no contact.

5) Food Delivery: All food delivery to be deposited outside of the office, just outside of either the front or back entry. Any outer bags are discarded immediately, food containers wiped down with antiviral wipes, and the cleaned food containers brought immediately to the white table in Ithaca or individual work station in Cortland.

Please email [admin@ithacaderm.com](mailto:admin@ithacaderm.com) with any questions or suggestions. Thank you for helping to keep our patients, staff, and community safe!