



Dear Valued Patient,

Barton Health is taking safety precautions to help limit the spread of COVID-19, and we are asking that every community member play an active role in minimizing any potential spread. In addition to practicing good hand hygiene, the California Public Health Department recommends local businesses & residents implement social distancing strategies including avoiding events or areas with large groups & keeping a 6-foot distance from others.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the immediate risk of being exposed to the COVID-19 virus is dependent on your location. Community spread within California is ongoing and person-to-person transmission is increasing. Specifics about cases in our area can be found through our local health department, or COVID-19 information can be found on our website, [BartonHealth.org](https://BartonHealth.org).

For the safety of our patients and healthcare providers, we are taking this risk seriously and asking both our patients and community to consider their health needs before visiting a medical office and/or any public interaction.

#### **When to Contact our Health Line**

If you are experiencing a fever, cough or shortness of breath, please contact your health care provider or call our **Barton Clinical Health Line: 530.600.1999**. Please consider self-isolating or wearing a mask in public as mitigating the spread of viral infections is paramount.

#### **Upcoming Appointments**

If you have an upcoming appointment AND are experiencing non-urgent symptoms of a fever, cough or shortness of breath, please contact your health care provider to reschedule your appointment. Alternatively, virtual appointment options may be offered through some insurances. A list of these options is posted on Barton's website at [BartonHealth.org](https://BartonHealth.org).

If you have an upcoming appointment AND are experiencing urgent symptoms of a fever, cough or shortness of breath AND believe your appointment cannot wait, or your symptoms require medical attention, please call our Barton Clinical Health Line immediately: 530.600.1999. If your medical condition is an emergency, please dial 9-1-1.

### **Limiting Visitors**

If you are not experiencing symptoms of fever, cough or shortness of breath AND are attending your appointment, we ask you limit the number of visitors that come with you; especially older adults and/or those with health risks or other complications.

### **Help Prevent Community Spread**

The California Department of Public Health is encouraging Californians who are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 to take actions to reduce their risk. Populations at higher risk include people over the age of 60, or people with compromised immune systems, or people with chronic medical illnesses. Each and every one of us can help mitigate community spread of COVID-19 in Tahoe. The CDC advocates the best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus:

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well should wear a facemask, as this does little to protect them from COVID-19.
  - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others. The use of facemasks is also important for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a healthcare facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Put distance between yourself and other people, including limiting large social gatherings, and keeping a minimum distance of 6 feet between people.

Thank you for your understanding and patience. The health and safety of our community and healthcare workers is our top priority, and these precautionary measures are essential to these efforts.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Matthew Wonnacott  
Chief Medical Officer, Barton Health