

Jerí M. Gruenes, DPM RD

Medicine and Surgery of the Foot & Ankle

1041 E. Yorba Linda Blvd. Suite #201 Placentia, CA 92870

714-985-9168 Fax 714-985-9161

As you are very likely aware, the spread of illness caused by a novel coronavirus, known as COVID-19, in communities throughout the US and many other nations poses a significant public health risk. Our top priorities at The Office of Jeri Gruenes, DPM are the health and safety of our patients, staff, and community. We are following this evolving situation closely, and based on the information we currently have, we are instituting several changes in our practice to minimize the risk of infection.

The following policies will be effective immediately until further notice. We apologize for any inconvenience, and we hope you will understand that these changes represent our best effort to safeguard your well-being.

1. Rescheduling of visits: Based on your underlying foot and ankle condition, history and symptoms, it may be reasonably safe to postpone your scheduled visit until a later date. We will be actively identifying and rescheduling any patient visits that are not considered HIGH PRIORITY from a medical risk standpoint. If you have not yet heard from our office and you have an upcoming routine follow-up (no treatment) appointment, please call us so that your file can be reviewed by your doctor to determine if your visit can be postponed.

2. Pre-Screening: All patients will be pre-screened by phone the day before scheduled appointment using the following questionnaire:

1. Have you tested positive for COVID-19?
2. Have you had contact with or provided care for anyone with confirmed COVID-19 in the last 30 days?
3. Have you traveled outside of the United States or had close contact (6 feet or less) with anyone who has traveled outside of the United States in the last 30 days?
4. Have you been on a cruise ship in the last 30 days?
5. Are you currently experiencing a fever over 100°F, coughing or difficulty breathing?
6. In the last 14 days, have you experienced a fever over 100°F, coughing or difficulty breathing?

If they answer to one or more of these questions is YES, the staff will direct you to call your Primary Health Provider and we will reschedule your appointment in our office.

3. Telehealth/Telemedicine/Virtual Visits: May be utilized as appropriate and at the discretion of the Doctor. Patients will need access to a Smart Device or Computer. The application utilized is HIPPA secure and complies with all the mandated Privacy Standards. This is considered a billable consultation to you or your insurance. All co-pays, co-insurances and/or deductibles apply.

4. Only one companion per patient: We understand that some of our patients prefer to be accompanied by family, friends and/or caregivers during their visits; however, based on the current guidelines, we are limiting patients to no more than ONE COMPANION for the duration of their visit. The purpose of this rule is to reduce the number of people in our waiting rooms and examination lanes so that it is easier to maintain the recommended 6 feet of safe distance between individuals.

5. Contact precautions: During your visit, you may be greeted by staff and doctors wearing gloves and/or face masks. Please do not be alarmed. Our Doctor and staff are in good health and symptom free, otherwise they are required to stay home if experiencing a cough, fever and/or shortness of breath. If you would like a mask, please advise the staff and one will be provided to you. We ask that you please understand that medical supplies, especially face masks, are currently in short supply and that it is everyone's responsibility to conserve such resources for those who truly need them.

6. Disinfecting Protocol: In addition, our staff will continue, as usual, to disinfect patient contact surfaces in the examination rooms between every patient visit. We ask that you be mindful and limit touching items in the office. There will be no pens available. All forms, insurance cards and photo ID', must be filled out at home and e-mailed to the office using our secure e-mail staff@jerigruenesdpm.com

We realize this is a rapidly changing situation and many questions remain unanswered at this time. Based on what we do know, the following is a list of resources that will provide helpful summaries and instructions on how you can lower your risk:

COVID-19: What you need to know (CDC Fact Sheets)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/communication/factsheets.html>

What to do if you are sick (Advice from the CDC)

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fabout%2Fsteps-when-sick.html

Myths and truths about COVID-19

<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/2019-novel-coronavirus-myth-versus-fact>

Frequently asked questions

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

WHO: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

FDA: <https://www.fda.gov/emergency-preparedness-and-response/mcm-issues/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19-frequently-asked-questions>

LA County: <http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/FAQ.pdf>

Orange County: <https://www.ochealthinfo.com/>

Our hearts go out to anyone who's been impacted by the virus, either directly or indirectly. We know how challenging this can be and we are thinking of you.

We also want to thank all the Doctor, Nurses and First Responders who are facing unprecedented challenges and forge ahead.

*Regards,
Jeri M. Gruenes, DPM*