

Update November 22, 2020

I have not updated my patients on the COVID-19 pandemic since March. Since the last update and as of today's date, 12.2 million Americans have been infected with COVID-19 and 256,000 Americans have died. Several of Dr. Friedman's patients have been infected with COVID-19. Many businesses have closed and there have been major economic losses. The response to the pandemic has unfortunately been politicized and I say unfortunately because the virus doesn't distinguish based on victim's political party. Please see Dr. Friedman's Letter in the Los Angeles Jewish Journal https://jewishjournal.com/letters_to_the_editor/316110/letters-lockdown-vs-no-lockdown/.

Dr. Friedman completely supports efforts to limit the spread of the virus, including wearing masks, social distancing, handwashing and staying at home. Listening to government officials including the CDC is crucial. Dr. Friedman agrees with data showing gatherings are much safer outside and encourages his patients to err on the side of safety and caution. Dr. Friedman is spearheading efforts at Charles R. Drew University to be a site for a vaccine study and after some delays, it looks like his University will be a site for the Sanofi vaccine in December 2020. Dr. Friedman is very excited about the promising results from the Moderna and Pfizer trials and thinks vaccines along with mask-wearing and social distancing will curtail the pandemic, hopefully in the latter half of 2021. He does think that COVID-19 will be with us for a long time. Dr. Friedman anticipates that changes due to COVID-19, including telemedicine and working from home will remain with us after the pandemic subsides.

As mentioned in the March update, patients with endocrine problems such as Cushing's syndrome, Addison's Disease, hypopituitarism and diabetes have slightly impaired immune systems, making them potentially susceptible for a more severe infection by COVID-19. He would recommend those patients to be especially vigilant about mask-wearing/social distancing and to get a vaccine when it comes out.

He advises his patients the following:

- Wear masks, social distancing, handwashing and staying at home as much as possible
- Use delivery services for groceries, food and medications.
- Wash hands frequently for 20 seconds and/or use hand sanitizer several times a day
- Avoid air travel, public gatherings and other public places as guided by local officials
- Quarantine if sick or exposed.
- Labcorp and Quest both introduced testing for COVID-19 using nasal swabs. Several other laboratories are also performing tests. Dr. Friedman recommends PCR testing and not rapid antigen testing. For those with symptoms of Coronavirus, he recommends seeing your primary care doctor for testing. Dr. Friedman is unable to provide requisitions or swabs for this testing that should be done by their primary doctor.
- While Dr. Friedman was initially enthusiastic about antibody testing, he is concerned about the quality of the tests and no longer recommends it.
- Labcorp and Quest are both still open and Quest has a new Peace of Mind program for lab services not related to COVID-19 and for patients who are 60 years of age or older, or have other conditions that put them at greater risk for COVID-19, in which patients can come to their nearby Quest location during the first hour of each day for VIP care.

- Dr. Friedman encourages people to get their hormone testing done and make their followup appointments.
- Many patients have requested extra supply of their medications. However, most insurances do not allow this and carefully monitor medication use. Dr. Friedman recommends patients to use a mail-order pharmacy and sign up for auto-refills so that they get a consistent supply of their medications.
- Except for patients sick with COVID-19, patients should not up-dose hydrocortisone
- Dr. Friedman has restarting in person visits on the last Tuesday of each month and continues to see patients via telemedicine on the other Tuesday nights. Please visit goodhormonehealth.com for more information or to schedule an appointment.
- Dr. Friedman's staff will still be doing in person growth hormone stimulation tests on Tuesday night in an isolated and sanitized clinic setting.
- Dr. Friedman especially encourages patients to eat healthy and exercise (especially being outside) including walking, hiking, biking, aerobic videos yoga or pilates at home, during this stressful period.
- Dr. Friedman encourages patients to get their flu vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine when available.
- Everyone should pray that the pandemic ends soon.
- Dr. Friedman wishes everyone to stay healthy.