



Outpatient • Office Based • Non-Operating Room

Recommendations for Ambulatory Elective Surgery During COVID-19 Pandemic

3/17/2020

SAMBA continues to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic. This pandemic is evolving and recommendations and restrictions change frequently. In response to inquiries, SAMBA is providing guidance which we hope our members will find helpful. We have evaluated the current information about COVID-19 at the time this statement was issued. Each facility should use extreme caution in making the decision whether to continue or to postpone elective surgeries based on their local situation, staffing and resources.

Because ambulatory surgery centers perform only elective and semi-elective procedures, and do not provide care for acutely ill patients, we recommend the following:

1. Work with your local public health officials to determine if it is appropriate to postpone surgeries to redirect resources to manage increased demands on the healthcare system.
2. Encourage surgeons to follow the [American College of Surgeons](#) recommendations.

If a decision is made to proceed please consider:

1. Consider a patient's age, comorbidities and the potential impact of the scheduled surgery on their immune status.

2. A preoperative screening phone call to all patients (and their companion) to remind them to stay home and call their PCP should they:
 - a. Have traveled to any of the countries with level 3 travel warning by the [CDC](#) within the last two weeks.
 - b. Have symptoms of COVID-19 or an upper respiratory tract infection:
 - i. Fever
 - ii. Cough
 - iii. Sore throat
 - iv. Shortness of breath
 - v. Recent pneumonia or flu
 - vi. Vomiting
 - c. Have been in contact with a person with COVID-19, a person with symptoms of COVID-19 or one being screened for COVID-19.
3. Monitor patients' (and their companion) temperature on arrival.
4. Refer patients with a temperature of 38° (100.4°F) or higher (usually triaged at the point of entry to avoid exposing staff and patients) to return home and contact their PCP for further management.
5. Monitor and encourage staff who have been exposed or have symptoms of COVID-19 to not report to work and to seek advice from their own healthcare providers.
6. Centers and leaders are encouraged to repeatedly check with our website and their local and state resources for updates as the situation evolves.