

Frequently Asked Questions

Before My Next Visit

Is it safe to come to the hospital/clinic for my appointment or surgery?

Yes! Arkansas Children's hospitals and clinics have always had guidelines and rules in place to help reduce the spread of illness. Taking care of patients and families is what we do best, and patient safety is our number one priority. Arkansas Children's has established the safest possible environment for patients, families, and staff including:

- Robust screening processes
- [Masking for everyone](#)
- Deep cleaning and sanitation practices
- More spacious waiting areas to allow for social distancing
- [Fewer entrances and access points to campus buildings](#)

What is Arkansas Children's doing to make the setting clean and safe?

Patient and family safety have always been a priority at Arkansas Children's facilities, and proper cleaning is just one aspect of patient safety. We use a 10-step cleaning process with a disinfectant effective against COVID-19 and other viruses. We give extra attention to high-touch surface areas, including light switches, sink faucets, and restrooms. We are cleaning all kiosks, common areas and patient rooms in use multiple times per day using medical-grade cleaning and sanitizing products.

Will clinics still be giving out prizes/goodies or should our family plan to bring our own from home?

If a child needs a special prize or fun distraction while they are here, Arkansas Children's will have individual treats that meet safety requirements.

What will happen if I decide to cancel my appointment because I don't want to risk coming into the hospital/clinic and telehealth is not an option?

Arkansas Children's encourages all patients and families to keep their appointments as they are currently scheduled to promote child health and well-being. We are prepared now to welcome all of our patients and families safely back to campus. In most cases, your provider feels it is important to see patients and families face-to-face. If you have already been contacted about an upcoming appointment, that means your provider has reviewed your patient history and believes that there is no significant increased risk in coming to your appointment.

If you have additional questions, please contact your care team directly or call us to discuss. We encourage all patients and families to [sign up for MyChart](#), so that they can message their care team there with questions.

How is Arkansas Children's screening employees, as well as patients and families/visitors?

All team members, patients and visitors entering Arkansas Children's facilities will be temperature screened upon entry to any of our facilities. As visitors, patients and families arrive on campus, they should expect to be asked a series of screening questions related to symptoms, travel and potential exposure. [Click here for a list of screening questions](#). While everyone is screened, Arkansas Children's is only testing children who meet the qualifying criteria set by the Arkansas Department of Health or who have an upcoming surgery at one of our facilities.

Frequently Asked Questions

What should we do if I or my child do not feel well prior to our visit?

If a patient, family member, or anyone in your household has symptoms such as a new cough, fever, shortness of breath, sore throat, new-onset muscle ache, or new-onset loss of taste or smell, please call the clinic before coming, and talk about your symptoms. Arkansas Children's will ask callers additional questions and give instructions for next steps.

How many people can come to my appointment or surgery?

In a continued effort to protect patient and team safety, the following visitor restrictions have been implemented:

- Only one adult per patient is allowed at any time in any area.
 - If you have a scheduled surgery at ACH, a second caregiver is allowed to wait in a separate building on campus.
 - Clinic visit appointments are only allowed one adult.
- All families are encouraged to make alternate care arrangements prior to arriving at Arkansas Children's.
- Please do not bring large groups, including additional family members, to the hospital.

How is Arkansas Children's deciding what appointments are rescheduled and in what order? Why do we have to wait so long if we should have had an appointment back in March, April, etc.?

For everyone's safety, Arkansas Children's is taking a phased approach to rescheduling appointments. We are sorry if you have had to wait. Arkansas Children's is moving quickly through the backlog of patients who may have been postponed. A member of our team will contact you when it is time to reschedule. If interested, you can use your MyChart account to be put on a waiting list in case an earlier appointment becomes available.

Should I arrive early for my clinic visit?

Yes, patients and caregivers are encouraged to please arrive 20 to 30 minutes early to allow plenty of time to find parking, go through the screening process and check in for appointments. The screening process is usually quick, but there may be a few people in line, so patients and families are asked to please remain 6 feet apart while waiting for screening, when they enter the lobby and in waiting areas.

What to Expect at My Next Visit

How do I practice proper social distancing/how is Arkansas Children's promoting this at the hospitals/clinics?

- Social distancing (i.e. remaining 6 feet away from others, staying home) is key to preventing the spread of COVID-19. While patients and families are in the hospital or clinic, Arkansas Children's asks that everyone please remain in designated visitor areas as much as possible.
- Arkansas Children's has already installed social distancing markers at each entrance and some clinical spaces. There are many more being installed over the coming weeks. Patients and families may see this in the form of social distancing dots or red tape labeled 6 feet. In waiting areas and clinics, signs are being used to block off seats to practice social distancing. You may notice furniture has been removed/rearranged to provide adequate spacing.
- We have expanded our surgery waiting area at ACH to [the train area on the first floor](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Where can I/we get food or coffee in the hospital? (Sack Lunch Program, Cafeteria, River Bend, Coffee shop, etc.)

Per state guidelines, Arkansas Children's has adjusted food service to provide a takeout-only option.

ACH: Sack lunches are being distributed through the outpatient clinics due to our limited hours at the Riverbend location.

Please ask staff members for directions to these locations:

- [Capital Café](#): 7 a.m.—8 p.m. daily (2nd Floor, Main Hospital)
- [Riverbend](#): 8 p.m.—midnight daily (1st Floor, Sturgis Building)
- [Daily Grind](#): 7 a.m.—2 p.m. Monday – Friday (1st Floor, Main Lobby)

ACNW:

- Hunt Café hours are 7 a.m.—2 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m.—2 p.m. on the weekends
- The coffee shop, located on the first floor, has coffee & snacks from 7 a.m.—12 p.m., Monday through Friday

If the only option is “grab and go” where will patients and families be allowed to eat while on site for clinic visits?

ACH: Seating is available but limited to space outside or additional space by [Riverbend](#) and [Daily Grind](#).

ACNW: Patients and their caregivers who are here for an appointment are able to eat at the Hunt Café as usual.

Why are all staff wearing face masks?

Physicians, nurses and staff are wearing protective equipment (masks, gowns and gloves) in an abundance of caution and in effort to keep our patients and families as safe as possible. All team members at Arkansas Children's are required to wear masks. Patients and families may notice staff wearing homemade masks or paper masks. Arkansas Children's follows the guidelines published by the CDC. Remember, wearing PPE or masks helps protect against the spread of COVID-19 as well as other illnesses.

Should we wear a mask? What if we don't have masks?

Arkansas Children's is taking additional steps to protect children and their families from potential exposure. We are requiring that all patients and their accompanying parent or guardian [wear masks in any of our facilities](#). If you have cloth masks, please bring and wear them while on campus. If you **do not** have a mask, Arkansas Children's will provide a new, unused mask at the door. If a child is under 2 years old, or cannot put on or a remove a mask without help, they should not wear a mask.

Will I need to wait in my car until it's time for my appointment?

Arkansas Children's is not requiring anyone to sit in their car before an appointment, but we do encourage that only one parent come to the hospital. Please make arrangements for other children and family members; **remember not to leave children in the car.**

Frequently Asked Questions

Recommendations for Patients/Families with Concerns or Anxiety

To help reassure my child before his/her appointment, I can make sure they know to expect:

- Physicians, nurses and staff are wearing masks, gowns and gloves in an effort to keep our patients and families as safe as possible. Arkansas Children's recommends talking to your child about some of the equipment that might be worn on their visit. We like to compare the face shield, gloves and equipment to something an astronaut might wear!
- Arkansas Children's also recommends practicing wearing homemade cloth masks at home if kids aren't used to seeing you or family members in masks. (Remember, children under age 2 should not wear face coverings for safety reasons.)
- If possible, you can let your child choose the face covering they want to wear to the doctor. Giving kids choices helps them feel empowered and in control of their experience.

Why can't my appointment be done using telehealth?

Your provider's office will help determine if telehealth is appropriate for your child's condition or complaint. Some complex conditions require an in-person visit (Examples: infants with fever, difficulty controlling asthma or injuries.) Testing and labs require in-person visits. For example, if your child has a sore throat or flu symptoms, you may be asked to bring your child to the office for in-person testing (strep test, flu test, blood test).

My child is at higher risk for complications of COVID-19 because of ____ health condition or immunocompromised. Is he/she at greater risk coming to the hospital or clinic for a visit? What extra steps could I take to keep them safe?

If an appointment has already been rescheduled, your provider has reviewed your child's patient history and believes that there is no significant increased risk in coming to your appointment. Arkansas Children's has established the safest possible environment for patients, families, and our team including:

- Detailed screening processes
- Masking for everyone
- Deep cleaning practices
- More room in waiting areas to allow for social distancing
- Fewer entrances to campus buildings

Waiting rooms and other public areas have been set up to provide social distancing, and the check-in process has been revamped to move families quickly into exam rooms or other private spaces.

Have extra waiting room spaces been created in an effort to keep my family 6 feet apart from others?

Extra waiting areas have been created, and Arkansas Children's continues to expand these to keep patients and families safe.

ACH: Surgery waiting, for example, has onsite and offsite locations away from the main hospital.

Does Arkansas Children's have enough masks for visitors and staff PPE?

Arkansas Children's is fortunate to have enough PPE for staff members. We ask that visitors bring and wear their own cloth masks while on campus. If patients and families **do not** have a mask, we will provide a new, unused mask at the door. If a child is under 2 years old, or cannot put on or a remove a mask without help, they should not wear a mask.