



# Integrative Medical Center of New Mexico, PC

Burton M. Berkson, MD, PhD

Arthur J. Berkson, MD

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Dear Integrative Medical Center of New Mexico Family,

In the midst of this healthcare crisis related to COVID-19, we wanted to update you all with all that we are doing and temporary changes in policy. We will be updating our website as we know more or make further changes. Please check in periodically at [www.drberkson.com](http://www.drberkson.com).

First, social distancing at this time is critical to prevent overpopulation of our hospitals and allow the sickest to get the care they need. We are all at risk. While seasonal influenza is a potentially serious illness, COVID-19 appears to be much more deadly

While almost everyone who develops COVID-19 symptoms seems to have mild manifestations and recovers, the elderly population and people with chronic illness have higher risk. That is a large proportion of our patient population.

We want to help protect you. We know that part of keeping you healthy means giving you access to medical care. Thus, we feel it is important to stay open and functioning to the greatest extent possible. Therefore, we will be making the following temporary changes in our office:

- **Telehealth:** While some appointments require in person evaluations, many can be accomplished via phone consultations. Dr. Arthur Berkson will continue to see patients in the office, as necessary, for as long as possible but we will encourage phone consults when deemed appropriate. However, Dr. Burton Berkson has some personal risk factors for more severe disease if he were to contract the illness so the vast majority of his visits will be via telephone until further notice. We will reduce our usual phone consult fee to equal that of a face-to-face visit fee. If you are in the office for treatment, we will ask to complete your vital signs for the appointment. We are also looking into telehealth software platforms.
- **Out-of-state patients restricted:** New Mexico has announced a 14-day self-isolation for any travelers from out-of-state so we cannot receive you in our office if you travel here from outside of New Mexico, unless you have first self-isolated in New Mexico for 14 days without symptoms.
- **To increase the space between patients to more than 6 ft.** between patients in the IV room, we are going to limit our number of chairs from ten to six. That can potentially mean longer wait times, but this may not occur since we have seen a large decrease in patients receiving IVs, due to social distancing and lack of travel.
- **In addition to our routine cleaning measures,** our staff will be cleaning surfaces in our workplace much more frequently. This includes chairs, door handles, faucet handles, tables, etc.

- If you prefer to wait in your vehicle or outside instead of in the waiting room, we will be happy to accommodate you. After you get your vital signs taken, advise us of where you will be and a good cell phone number to reach you.

There are both allopathic and natural interventions that we can take to try to keep our immune systems healthy and combat viruses. Prevention is key. Here are some measures we think are helpful for all of us to stay healthy:

- As always, the most important strategies that we can take to protect ourselves and others is to wash our hands regularly (for at least 20 seconds) and limit touching our face, eyes, and nose as much as possible.
- Limit social gatherings as much as possible and avoid large groups. Keep a distance of 6 ft. from other individuals.
- Stay at home as much as possible. Eliminate non-essential interstate, international, and other long-distance travel.
- Please do not bring guests to the office unless absolutely necessary. If absolutely required, limit your guests to one. No guests will be allowed in the infusion (IV) room.
- We should not leave our house if we have any signs or symptoms of upper or lower respiratory illness. Please do not enter the office if you have fever, runny nose, sore throat, cough, muscle pains, or shortness of breath. Instead, call us. We will then have a nurse call you to discuss your next steps.
- To limit your wait time in the IV room, consider arriving at non-peak times – not 8:30 am, 11:30 am, or 1:30 pm on long days. Try 9 a.m. or 2:30 p.m., for instance.
- If you have a cell phone, please bring it, along with all your medications. This will assist our communication in case we need to reach you outside of our waiting room.
- Please be patient with us as we work our hardest to assist you during our shortage of supplies and staff. There has been an increase in demand across the country for supplements, which has resulted in decrease in supply. We also anticipate times of reduced staff due to family demands and personal risk factors and because we are requiring them to stay home with any signs and symptoms of respiratory illness.
- Stay updated on our website and other resources: <https://cv.nmhealth.org> (NM Dept of Health); Coronavirus Hotline 855-600-3453; CDC website <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>

We are all in this together! Keep yourself well by eating healthy, staying active, immersing yourselves in nature, praying and meditating, and loving yourself and each other. Please let us know if you have any questions or need any assistance in these trying times.

With warm thoughts for all of you,

Drs. Arthur & Burt Berkson & the staff of IMC of New Mexico