



# COVID-19 Update

May 6, 2020

## Resuming Elective Surgical Procedures

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While state stay-at-home orders remain in place for now for our county related to COVID-19, we will be reopening some of our services that were temporarily suspended in mid-March as a result of the pandemic.

Beginning next Monday, elective operative procedures will resume.

This move, done in accordance with the state Department of Health, will allow us to safely provide the delayed care our community needs while we continue to monitor and further guard against the spread of COVID-19.

While this move will increase foot traffic in and out of the facility, we will maintain strict screening protocols, with patient visitation still suspended. We are confident that our processes will allow for the safe care our patients depend on.

Please see the attached letter from Brandon Ball, M.D., and Chief of Surgery and Linda Kunkel, Administrative Director of Surgical Services at Uniontown Hospital for full details on this announcement around surgical electives.

For media inquiries or more information, please contact Uniontown Hospital Director of Community Relations Joshua Krysak at 724-430-8634 or [krysak@utwn.org](mailto:krysak@utwn.org).



To: Dept. of Surgery/ Medical Staff

From: Dr. Brandon Ball, M.D., Chief of Surgery  
Linda Kunkel, Administrative Director of Surgical Services

Date: May 6, 2020

RE: COVID-19 SIC Update – Resuming Elective Surgery at Uniontown Hospital

As you all are aware, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf has lifted restrictions on performing elective surgery. We understand how disruptive COVID-19 has been for all medical professionals and our patients. We thank you for your patience during this crisis.

Thankfully, our community has seen a downward trajectory of positive cases and cases that require hospitalization through the continued mitigation tactics implemented here and across the region. As such, we are now able to begin taking the necessary steps to resume elective surgical, procedural cases in the Operating Room and GI area.

Surgical Services is prepared and equipped to resuming elective surgery after meeting the following criteria:

- Adequate PPE available
- Adequate surgical equipment and supplies are available
- Adequate staffing to care for surgical and post-operative patients
- Available overall hospital capacity

Most patients scheduled for surgery will have some new processes in place as a result of COVID-19 protocols. These include:

- Instructions to have pre-op COVID-19 test between 72 and 96 hours prior to their procedure. These tests will be performed at the drive-thru tent operated by Uniontown Hospital.
- Instructions to remain in isolation following COVID-19 testing up to the time of their surgery. Any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 including fever, shortness of breath, respiratory symptoms, sore throat, cough or diarrhea should be reported to their physician.

Patients that test positive for COVID-19 or patients experiencing COVID-19 symptoms will not be scheduled for surgery.

Additionally, patients that are getting a local anesthetic or spinal anesthetic will not be required to be tested for COVID-19.

We have met requirements necessary to safely begin to perform the procedures our patients have been waiting for. On **Monday, May 11, 2020** we will begin performing elective surgery on outpatient low acuity procedures with a modified OR block schedule. The following week of May 18, 2020, we will increase the number of OR rooms and begin to schedule inpatient procedures as well as outpatient. By May 26, 2020 we anticipate being at normal OR PRE-COVID-19 block schedule.

Uniontown Hospital remains committed to creating the safe environment necessary to ensure these procedures can resume. Please rest assured that we will continue to take all precautions to maintain that heightened level of safety for all of our patients and staff.

Thank you.