



CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF EMERGENCY PHYSICIANS

COVID-19

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A Message from the Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians to Canadians: Your Emergency Departments are Safe

For Immediate Release

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The Canadian Association of Emergency Physicians (CAEP) wants to advise all Canadians that our Emergency Departments are safe, open and available to you and your families.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused much disruption in the health care sector, with surgeries cancelled, investigations and treatments delayed, and primary care practiced virtually.

Anecdotally, Canadian Emergency Departments from coast to coast have reported markedly reduced patient visits. There are presumably two reasons for this: patients unwilling to burden a fragile and potentially overwhelmed health care system and/or a fear of either contracting or infecting others with the COVID virus.

Canadian emergency physicians are seeing a significant reduction in the number of patients presenting with heart attacks, strokes and other time-sensitive medical conditions. A delay in seeking care for any of a multitude of common emergency complaints, such as chest pain, headache, weakness, abdominal pain, or mental health symptoms may potentially lead to irreversible and preventable damage.

Avoidance of an emergency visit for fear of contracting COVID-19 is unfounded. Patients are well-screened at the time they are triaged and patients who might have the COVID virus are rapidly segregated and provided with appropriate protective equipment, such as masks. Your risk of contracting COVID-19 casually as a result of an emergency visit is minimal.

Do not delay seeking medical attention if you perceive an acute change in your physical or mental health status.

Canadian Emergency Departments are safe, and we are here to serve you. Your health matters to us.

***** If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Christina Bova at 613-523-3343 x17 (office), or email at cbova@caep.ca**