

**A message from Andy Anderson, MD
President and Chief Executive Officer
RWJ Barnabas Health Medical Group**

As we continue to follow the stay at home order issued by the state of New Jersey, there are still essential errands that need to happen. One of these is grocery shopping, and whether you have decided to shop in the store yourself, order curbside pickup or have groceries delivered, we know you want to do it in the safest way possible. Since we have received many questions surrounding this topic, below we have compiled the most frequently asked questions and included our advice on how to meet you household needs in a safe and healthy manner.

Grocery Shopping FAQs:

Q: How can I make sure I am protecting myself and other shoppers when I am in the grocery store?

A: There are several steps you can take to make sure your in-store shopping experience is safer:

- Create a shopping list ahead of time, this way you know exactly what you need and can shop quickly. Try to buy one to two weeks of groceries so you have enough, but are not adding to the temporary grocery shortages.
- If you are at high risk or immunocompromised, many stores are now offering special hours for people at higher risk. Call your local grocery store to inquire and shop during those hours.
- Per the state of New Jersey's required guidelines, please wear a face covering or mask while you are in the store or when out in any public space. Wipe down your shopping cart or basket handles with sanitizing wipes. You should also wipe down any reusable shopping bags before/after each use. You can also wear disposable gloves while in the store.
- Continue to practice social distancing while shopping, remain at least 6 feet away from other shoppers and store employees as much as possible.
- Remember to avoid touching your face. Wearing a mask will help with this.
- Use touchless payment (pay without touching money, a card, or a keypad) if possible. If you must handle money, a credit card, or a keypad, use hand sanitizer after paying and as an extra precaution you can wipe down your credit card with a sanitizing wipe.
- After leaving the store, use hand sanitizer. Once you are home, wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds, and repeat again once you put away your groceries.

Q: Should I sanitize my groceries once I bring them home or they are delivered to me?

A: The US Food & Drug Administration has stated that "there is no evidence of food packaging being associated with the transmission of COVID-19. However, if you wish, you can wipe down product packaging and allow it to air dry, as an extra precaution." For canned goods, make sure to rinse the lid before opening."

Q: How should I wash my fresh produce?

A: You should continue to practice proper food safety techniques, which means before consuming produce such as fresh fruit and vegetables, rinse them under running tap water. For firmer produce, such as potatoes, scrub them well. You should NOT use soap on your fresh produce as this can cause an upset stomach if soap is ingested when you eat your food. Also worth noting, like always, when unpacking groceries, be sure to refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, eggs, seafood, and other perishables within two hours of purchasing.

Q: Once I unpack my groceries how do I ensure my kitchen is clean?

A: After you have unpacked your groceries and washed your hands, you should sanitize your kitchen counters using any disinfectant product you have at home, or you can use a DIY solution with five tablespoons (1/3rd cup) of unscented liquid chlorine bleach to one gallon of water or four teaspoons of bleach per quart of water.

- Please remember do NOT use this solution or other disinfecting products on food.
- You should also wipe down any cabinet, pantry, refrigerator or freezer handles you may have touched while putting away your groceries.

See a doctor for a virtual visit:

RWJ Barnabas Health medical group providers are available to offer virtual care to you and your loved ones via telemedicine services.

It's easy to connect with a primary care doctor or a specialist:

Call 888-724-7123, Monday to Friday, from 8 am to 5:30 pm.*

Our team will connect you with a provider's office.

A staff member at the office will walk you through the simple process to launch the video session with your doctor during your scheduled appointment time.

You can also visit rwjbh.org/medicalgroup to locate a provider and call the office directly to schedule a telemedicine visit.

If you aren't feeling well, telemedicine is an effective and convenient way for you to connect with a RWJ Barnabas Health medical group provider so that he/she can determine the best course of treatment and most beneficial next steps to ensure your health care needs are being met. It's also a great way to establish a relationship with a primary care provider to manage and discuss chronic health issues or to reach out to a specialty care provider, such as a cardiologist, oncologist or gastroenterologist, to talk about symptoms or concerns.

We are here for you when you need us. Please don't hesitate to call.

Visit rwjbh.org/medicalgroup or call 888-724-7123.

*Messages left after hours or on weekends, will be returned the next business day.

Support for Chronic Conditions

As we continue to adhere to stay at home orders and take social distancing measures to help slow the spread of COVID-19, coping with a chronic condition such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, congestive heart failure or diabetes mellitus, can become more challenging.

To assist with managing your symptoms and medication regimen, our clinicians may be contacting you to discuss your care plan if you have been diagnosed with one of the conditions mentioned above. As always, we are available at any time if you have a question or concern, so please don't hesitate to contact your doctor's office directly.

Thank you for your support of RWJ Barnabas Health.

We are in this together.

Let's be healthy together.

Visit rwjbh.org/covid19 for useful information and updates and details about our facility visitor policies and procedures.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

New Jersey COVID-19 Information Hub (Testing sites are included on this site.)

World Health Organization

During this time, we thank healthcare workers across the world for their commitment to caring for those who need them most. If you've had a great experience with an RWJ Barnabas Health medical group clinician or just want to share your thanks for the work being done to support the COVID-19 pandemic, please let us know at rwjbh.org/heroes.