

# FAQ: New COVID-19 Symptom Checker Chat Box

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## What is the COVID-19 symptom checker chat box and how does it work?

The symptom checker chat box is an automated feature whereby each visitor is greeted with a welcome message and general COVID-19 information from the CDC which is updated every four hours. The patient then responds to questions asked by the symptom checker chat box to receive further guidance to appropriate care based on symptoms, potential exposure, and other risk factors. The primary goals are to help patients stay informed, reduce calls and/or visits to clinics and ERs when unnecessary, and provide immediate guidance for those who may be fearful or concerned.

This tool is being used by many other leading hospital systems in the United States as well, and is supported by the digital team at CommonSpirit Health. The pilot in the Pacific Northwest has been met with great success.

## How can the COVID-19 symptom checker chat box help?

The COVID-19 symptom checker chat box is designed to help with screening, care navigation, and patient education. It makes COVID-19 information easily accessible to patients and the community. Below are the main functions of the chat box:

- Help people check for COVID-19 symptoms, exposure and risk factors
- Navigate them to appropriate health system resources and care settings
- Provide general information on symptoms, prevention, and preparedness
- Answer common questions about COVID-19

The symptom checker chat box also supports our current triage messaging by directing patients with mild symptoms to our virtual urgent care screening option. Those with more severe symptoms are directed to the appropriate triage center or ER.

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## **How were the COVID-19 protocols developed?**

The educational information within the symptom checker chat box was developed from CDC guidelines and reviewed by divisional and national physicians and clinical advisors. It will be updated as guidelines change.

## **Is the COVID-19 symptom checker chat box free?**

Yes, it is provided to patients and community members free of charge.

## **Is the COVID-19 symptom checker chat box meant to replace doctor visits?**

No, it is not a replacement for healthcare visits or your care team. In fact, the symptom checker chat box feature was created to support all clinicians and caregivers in taking care of patients. In this time of heightened concern, we designed it to help manage the increased volume of patients in our ERs and clinics and provide immediate guidance for those who may be fearful or concerned. Community members will be directed to the appropriate clinical location depending upon their symptoms.

## **Can the COVID-19 symptom checker chat box provide a medical diagnosis, advice, or treatment options?**

The COVID-19 symptom checker chat box is not intended for diagnostic purposes. All diagnoses must be given by a healthcare professional. It is here to help patients understand their symptoms and risk factors, and navigate them to the most appropriate care setting.

If you have questions about the new symptom checker chat box, please contact [digitalstrategyanddeliverysupport@dignityhealth.org](mailto:digitalstrategyanddeliverysupport@dignityhealth.org).

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