COVID-19 & The Optometric Community
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Dr. Richard Madonna
SUNY College of Optometry
Professor | Chairman of the Department of Clinical Education
Director of the Office of Continuing Education | SUNY Alumnus

• Presenting: Temporary COPE requirements update
COVID-19 & The Optometric Community

Dr. Michael McGovern
SUNY College of Optometry
Chief Medical Officer of the University Eye Center
*SUNY Alumnus*

- Presenting: Department of Health Update
COVID-19 & The Optometric Community

Dr. Raymond A. Pirozzolo
President of the New York State New York State Optometric Association
SUNY Alumnus

• Presenting: NYSOA Update
COVID-19 & The Optometric Community

Dr. Viola Kanevsky
Vice President of the New York State Optometric Association
Owner of Acuity NYC
SUNY Alumna

• Presenting: COVID-19 & Your Private Practice
Closed & Coping with Corona
The day before I was supposed to leave for a Weekend vacation...
I realized I would have to cancel...
EVERYTHING

“Against the assault of laughter nothing can stand.”

-Mark Twain
Dear Team,

To keep everyone safe and healthy, I wanted to review some basic office hygiene precautions.

**Hand washing** must be performed before and after significant contact with any patient and after activities likely to cause contamination, for example, eating or handling food, emptying waste paper baskets, going to the toilet, blowing/wiping/touching one’s nose and mouth, and after coughing and sneezing. When seeing patients or when in any area other than the privacy of the test room, you must avoid touching your own face, nose, mouth and eyes. The effectiveness of hand hygiene procedures is decreased when a person has cuts and abrasions (as intact skin is a natural defense against infection). Cuts and abrasions should be covered with water resistant band-aids.

The CDC guidelines recommend that fingernails are kept clean and short, that artificial nails are not worn and that if nail polish is used, it should not be chipped and should be removed every four days.

Long sleeves and items of clothing that are not regularly laundered such as sweaters, suit jackets, ties and so on, have the potential to be routes for patient to patient transmission of pathogens such as *Staphylococcus aureus* (including methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*). Either wear elbow length sleeves or regularly dry clean or launder these items.

Sinks must be kept clean. Please use Lysol to regularly disinfect faucet handles, flush activator, grab bars, and doorknobs. Place all pens used throughout the day into a tray and spray with alcohol. Let dry overnight. The front door handles should be wiped down with Lysol by the first person to open and the last to leave. If you are not sure it was done, do it again.

**Proper Hand Washing**

Hand care products, such as plain (non-antimicrobial) soap and antiseptic products, can become contaminated. To avoid contamination, closed containers should be used to store liquid products and should be washed and dried thoroughly before being refilled. Although both alcohol-based hand rinses and gels decrease bacterial counts on hands, alcohol-based hand rinses have been shown to be more effective than alcohol-based hand gels. Soap has mild antibacterial properties, but it does not kill viruses. It does remove dirt, though, so wet your hands with water, so wet your hands thoroughly with warm water, lather them up properly with soap on both sides, in between the fingers and under the nails, one hand and then the other. Rinse them thoroughly under running water for 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing Happy Birthday twice). **Rinse thoroughly is key to washing away any viruses.** Dry your hands well with a disposable towel then use that towel to turn off the tap before throwing it away. Paper towels are superior to air dryers because the towels dry your hands more quickly and more thoroughly than dryers do, and contamination happens more through wet hands than dry.

**Food and Drink**

There should be absolutely no food or drink brought out to the dispensing room or front desk. The risk of touching your face while drinking or eating is too high to allow this practice while encountering patients.

Please keep the front desk supplied with hand sanitizer for patient use and keep a bowl of throat lozenges handy to reduce the risk of coughing in public areas.

**Immunizations**

You should have a flu vaccine annually and speak to your GP to make certain that all other vaccines are up to date as recommended.

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Welcome!

We are seeing patients but ask you to observe the following rules:

1) If you feel unwell do not enter, call us first at 212-580-2020.

2) Wash your hands immediately upon entering the office, the bathroom is to your right.

3) Your temperature will be scanned as you exit the bathroom. If it is elevated, we will ask you to go home even if you are asymptomatic unless you are experiencing an ocular emergency.

4) Please proceed immediately to an examination room. Thank you for your patience and cooperation.

Be well!
Communicating With Patients

Dear,

Out of an abundance of caution, we are asking all our patients who are considered high risk, to postpone non-essential excursions outside their homes in order to reduce risk of contracting COVID-19. This includes anyone over the age of 60, pregnant or nursing mothers, and anyone who is immunocompromised.

Although our office staff is vigilant about following all CDC and AOA guidelines, sanitizing all surfaces and eyewear, disinfecting all equipment, and common areas (reception area, bathroom, door handles, etc.), we nonetheless wish to avoid risking the health of our most vulnerable patients with unnecessary exposure to others who may be contagious but asymptomatic.

In an effort to further protect our patients and staff, we ask that you all are mindful of the following precautions:

- If you are sick, please stay home. If you have had contact with someone who is ill or are caring for someone at risk, please defer your appointment.
- If you have an ocular emergency or any urgent issue—please call us to schedule a telephone, FaceTime, or Skype consult. If the doctor determines that she cannot resolve an urgent concern without seeing you in person, we will arrange an appointment before or after regular office hours so that no other patients are in the office at the same time.
- If you or your child are out of contacts or have broken or lost your glasses, and cannot get to our office, we can almost always fabricate and ship a replacement set, as we have your measurements on file.
- If you need a refill of your glaucoma or allergy medication we can generally do that electronically—call us and a doctor will get back to you shortly.

Until further notice the office remains open for all your needs, including emergencies.

Thank you for your patience and cooperation during this difficult time as we all work together to keep our community healthy and safe.

Warm regards,

Viola Kanevsky, O.D.
Jenna Sahner, O.D.
Doug Dingier
Rachel Zipov
Laura Kim
Claire Zipov

Acuity NYC

Dear Patients,

As of Tuesday evening, March 17th, the CDC has recommended that all routine eye care be deferred until further notice, in order to slow the transmission of COVID-19 through our community.

Please be assured that we are still available to triage all urgent and emergent issues as well as help you with routine matters during this challenging time.

What does this mean?

1) If you are scheduled for an annual eye examination we will tentatively reopening the schedule to routine care starting on April 19th.

2) If you need to replace glasses or contact lenses and need an extension on your prescription, please contact us and we will assist you in obtaining some until you can come in for a visit.

3) If you are running out of a medication please contact us and we can transmit a refill electronically to your pharmacy.

4) If you have an issue which cannot wait for an office visit, contact us and we will schedule a FaceTime, Skype or Telephone appointment with one of our doctors. Medicare has temporarily relaxed its telehealth rules to allow this type of communication during the pandemic crisis. Other insurers may follow suit and allow for reimbursement of virtual care costs. The consultation must be initiated at your request.

5) If you have an ocular emergency we are, as always, available to help you at any time. Call 1-212-990-2020 and wait for instructions at the end of the message. Dr. Kanevsky or Dr. Sahner will try their best to meet you in the office whenever possible, in some instances a house call may be possible if you cannot leave your home. If not we will direct you to the nearest eye emergency facility.

6) During this period of social distancing and quarantine, we must all do our part by restricting activities outside the home except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

7) Please remember that 80% of COVID-19 cases are mild and resolve within a week. However, if you feel your symptoms are worsening, call ahead before visiting your doctor's office or emergency department and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.

The CDC has many wonderful resources. Arm yourself and your family with clear information will help you avoid undue stress.


We have asked our staff to stay home until further notice to protect them, our patients, our city, our nation, and our planet. Despite the financial and emotional hardships this will cause, we ask every one of you to do the same. Together we will weather this storm.

With sincerest wishes for your continued good health we remain at your service,

Viola Kanevsky, OD
Jenna Sahner, OD
Keeping patients informed

Call to reschedule all appointments for the coming month:

Message to leave when calling patients to reschedule

in accordance with recommendations from the CDC, we are rescheduling any non-urgent appointments which require close contact with patients in order to prevent transmission of COVID-19. As eye examinations involve repeated manipulation of the eye and hand-eye contact, we feel it is in your best interest to defer this visit. Please email or call us to reschedule - we are hoping to resume routine examinations in a month. You can always reach us in an emergency by calling 212-580-2020.

If you are running out of contacts or your glasses have broken, we can arrange to have an interim supply or another pair mailed to you.

Thank you and be well.
Keeping Your Staff Engaged

Here are some things I have had my staff doing from their homes:

EYE LEARN from AOA:

Hello Team, I would like you to try and do one 40 minute-1hour module per day - you can choose from the topics that you think are most useful to the practice and interesting to you. Take notes and make sure you complete any tests at the end. Also register whatever CE you get with your licensure boards and print out or email to me any completion certificates you get at the end. Once you’ve completed one or two please write a one paragraph review and email that to me. I need to know if it’s good/bad/useful/not - any questions, suggestions for improvement, etc.

Thanks!

http://aoa.peachnewmedia.com/store/provider/provider09.php
Keeping tabs on your patients at risk

Call to check on all patients over 65

Script:
Hi, this is Claire,
I'm calling from Dr. Kanevsky's office.
Just checking on you at this time to make sure you are ok and don't need anything?
UTILIZING DOWN TIME
keep Planning Ahead

Call all patients due for exams and schedule appointments after May 1st:

Call Scripts To Schedule Routine Appointments

Live Call

Hello (Mr. / Ms. Patient),

This is (your name) calling from Acuity NYC. How are you doing?

I'm calling to let you know that you are due for your eye examination and we hope to be seeing routine patients again starting on May 1st. I'd like to reserve an appointment for you that is as convenient as possible.

What day or time of the week might work for you?

Would this appointment time work for you?

OK, great - We look forward to seeing you on __________.

What number shall we use to text a reminder?

Be well and we will see you soon,

Thank you, bye bye.

Voicemail Message

Hello (Mr. / Ms. Patient),

This is (your name) calling from Acuity NYC, the office of Doctors Kanovsky and Salser. We hope you're doing well.

I'm calling because we expect to start seeing routine patients starting on May 1st and our records indicate you are due for your annual eye exam. We would like to reserve an appointment for you at a convenient time.

Please call our office at 212-580-2020 or email info@acuitynyc.com to schedule an appointment.

We wish you continued good health and look forward to seeing you again soon - thank you.
Communicating
with GPs and Pediatricians

letting staff know...thanks

On Mon, Mar 23, 2020 at 11:19 AM Viola Kanevsky <viola@acuitynyc.com> wrote:
Dear Dr. Breite,

I hope this finds you well. I wanted to let you know that my office remains open on a limited basis and we are offering telemedicine services for any of your patients that need urgent eyecare. If a patient cannot be helped on a telephone or video chat, I am able to schedule them for an in-office appointment for urgent issues such as abrasions, foreign bodies, iritis, etc.

Please contact me if you have an emergency case and I will do my best to accommodate your patient.

Wishing you strength and health,

Viola
Viola Kanevsky, OD
212-580-2020
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Together we will weather this storm.

With sincerest wishes for your continued good health we remain at your service,
colleagues, friends, and family

- OSCONY
- NYSOA
- AOA
- SUNY CLASSMATES
Dr. Richard Soden
SUNY College of Optometry
Director of Health Care Development
SUNY Alumnus

- Presenting: Integrating Telehealth into your practice: Telemedicine, Billing & Coding
COVID-19 & The Optometric Community

Dr. Andrea Thau
Past-President of the American Optometric Association
SUNY Alumna

Presenting: AOA Update
DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY ARE FRONTLINE PROVIDERS OF ESSENTIAL CARE
• Secured full recognition for doctors in federal crisis relief legislation

• Delivered updated billing and coding briefing to thousands of doctors seeking to continue to provide care

• Won much-needed continuity support available to doctors, optometry practices and optometry students through new crisis recovery programs and funding
AOA CRISIS RELIEF AND RECOVERY PLAN

IMMEDIATE AOA DUES RELIEF
IMMEDIATE DUES AND ASSESSMENT FREEZE
DIRECT AFFILIATE SUPPORT
PROGRAM REPRIORITIZATION
AOA FOUNDATION RECOVERY FUND
MEMBER RESOURCES & UPDATES
AOA.ORG/COVID19

- HPI COVID-19 resources
- AOA guide to telehealth-based care during COVID-19
- WEBINAR: Medicare Telehealth Billing and COVID-19
- State-by-state COVID-19 resources
- Understanding COVID-19 sick leave and FMLA policies
- AOA guidance for optometry practices
- AOAxcel resources for AOA members
- Patient guide to contact lens wear during COVID-19

U.S. senators publicly committed to emergency crisis relief grants and loans for physicians, including doctors of optometry (March 24, 2020, 1 p.m. ET)

S. 3569 co-sponsors include the following senators:
- Michael Bennet, D-Coo.
- John Barrasso, R-Wyo.
AOA webinar
3.31.20
• Facts about
  • Sick Leave and FMLA requirements
  • Financial support from new stimulus package
ANDREA P. THAU, O.D., FAAO, FCOVD, FNAP

Diplomate, American Board of Optometry
Associate Clinical Professor Emerita, SUNY Optometry
Past President, American Optometric Association
Past President, New York State Optometric Association
Policy Chair, Vision Care Section, APHA
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1-212-685-2457
Thank you!