**APPENDIX 3: Instructions for Patients**

This document contains instructions that were printed for patients after their visit to the CCF clinic. The first set of instructions included here was given to patients who were tested for COVID-19. There was another very similar set of instructions given to patients who were suspected to have COVID-19, but were not tested due to resource limitations, which included the same information about isolation and self-monitoring. The second set of instructions included here was given to patients who were given pulse oximeters to self-monitor at home.

These instructions were disseminated jointly by our hospital system and affiliated medical schools (New York Presbyterian, Weill Cornell Medicine, Columbia) and were utilized in outpatient settings throughout our hospital system.

**Information on Viral Syndromes and the Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)**

We believe you have a viral syndrome which may include symptoms such as body aches, fevers, chills, runny nose, cough, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea. It is possible that you have SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 also known as the novel coronavirus. It is also possible that you have another common virus such as the cold or the flu.

Today you were tested for COVID-19 but determined to be well enough to go home. Your COVID-19 test results will be available electronically on our portal, Connect. If you are not yet signed up for our online portal, you may do so at <https://www.myconnectnyc.org>

If your result is positive for COVID-19, you will be contacted for further instructions.

Most patients with COVID-19 have mild symptoms and recover on their own. In addition to rest and hydration, you can treat your symptoms with medicines for fever, cough, congestion, etc. as directed by your doctor.

Because all viruses are contagious, especially COVID-19, you should observe the following:

**Isolate yourself from others**

* Wear a mask when leaving medical practice.
* Do not use public transportation.
* It is best for you to walk home if you live within walking distance and feel well enough to walk home.
* If you have to take a car, wear a mask and leave the window open.

**Stay home unless you need urgent medical care**

* Do not go to work, school, or public areas, such as stores or movie theaters or social gatherings.
* Avoid having visitors, including older or frail relatives with medical conditions.
* Wear a face mask when around other people or pets.
* If available, stay in a separate bedroom and use a separate bathroom.

**Clean your hands often:**

* Wash your hands often with soap and water (for 20 seconds – sing “Happy Birthday” to yourself while washing hands). You can use hand sanitizer containing alcohol if soap and water is not available.
* If using hand sanitizer with alcohol, cover all surfaces of your hands and rub hands together until dry.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Clean your hands if you do touch your face.
* Try to minimize physical contact; avoid hand-shaking.

**Cover your coughs and sneezes:**

* Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough and sneeze. If a tissue is not available cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve (not your hands).
* Throw tissues away in trashcan that has a bag in it. Empty your trash daily.
* Always wash your hands after you throw away the tissue.

**Do not share household items:**

* Do not share cups, plates, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or clothes with other people or pets.
* After you use these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.
* Place your laundry in a washable bag. Do not use a communal laundry area.
* If you have your own washing machine, read and follow directions on labels of laundry and detergent. Use normal laundry detergent according to washing machine instructions and dry thoroughly using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.

**Clean often touched surfaces each day to kill germs:**

* Clean “high touch” surfaces such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables with household cleaner with bleach according to the label instructions.
* Clean immediately any surfaces that have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.

**Self-care:**

* Rest as much as possible.
* Drink more liquids to help thin and loosen mucus so it is easier to cough up.
* Soothe a sore throat by gargling with warm salt water. Make salt water by dissolving ¼ teaspoon salt in 1 cup warm water (8 ounces).
* Use a humidifier or vaporizer to increase air moisture in your home. This may make it easier to breathe and help decrease coughing.
* Use saline nasal drops as directed to relieve congestion. Apply petroleum-based jelly around the outside of nostrils to decrease irritation from blowing your nose.
* Do not smoke**.** Chemicals in cigarettes and cigars can make your symptoms worse.

**Monitor your symptoms:**

* Symptoms of respiratory viruses, such as cough, may last as long as 1-2 weeks
* Notify us if you worsen, if your temperature climbs higher, you have chest pain or difficulty breathing, if you feel more weak and dizzy.
* Before you seek care, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you are coming.
* Put on a facemask before you enter the facility.
* If you have a medical emergency, call 911. Put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.



