Reopening After COVID-19

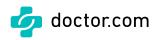Messaging Guidelines and Email Templates

How to use these templates

Use these messaging templates to discuss the steps your practice is taking to reopen. They are simply guides to help jump-start your conversations and provide context for your patient population. Feel free to use them as is or edit as you see fit.

What's Included:

- Overall Communication Best Practices
- Email Templates:
    - Reopening Announcement
    - In-Person Pre-Appointment Reminder
    - VirtualVisit Pre-Appointment Reminder
- Link to COVID-19 Resource Center: https://www.doctor.com/resources/covid-19-resource-center

Overall Communication Best Practices

In all of your patient communications, make sure that you are clearly communicating precautions you're taking for patient health and safety.

NRC research shows that consumers trust health care providers as a source of truth regarding COVID-19 over information from news outlets and even government officials. It is therefore incredibly important to communicate with patients around steps you are taking to safeguard their health, and any changes to the patient experience that they should be aware of before seeking care with you. Even if the protocols you are following (including those from the CDC) may seem obvious, communicate transparently without assuming that patients expect them. Some steps you might consider implementing and communicating to patients (either via your Google My Business page, provider directory, website, third-party listings or email) include:

- Disinfecting measures for exam rooms, surfaces, etc.
- Social distancing measures within the office (including waiting room etiquette)
- PPE protocols for providers and visitors (including face masks, gloves, etc.)
- Patient screenings or testing, including any rapid testing (if available)
- Telemedicine offerings (including when and how to use them)
- Non-patient visitor limitations
- Pre-testing protocols for incoming patients
- Provider or schedule changes

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Email Template: Reopening Announcement

Use Case: As social distancing restrictions start to ease, use this email template to help message what you and your practice are doing to ensure safety of your patients. It also lets them know what to expect, and prepare for their visit whether it's over telemedicine or in-person.

Audience: Current Patients
Subject Line: [Practice Name] is open. Here's what you need to know
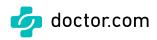
Hi **[First Name]**,

We hope you are staying safe and healthy during the coronavirus pandemic.

[Practice Name] will be introducing additional care options on **[Date of reopening]** to serve our patients' healthcare needs with additional safety and protective measures. We've made a few important changes to our processes:

- **Updated Location Availability and Hours**
  a. [List schedule and hours and any changes in schedule due to COVID-19]
- **Requesting an appointment (in-person or virtual appointment)** Be sure to let our staff know the reason for your visit, and if you suspect any COVID-19 symptoms so we can take proper precautions to ensure everyone's safety.
  a. **Call us** at [Practice Phone Number]
  b. **Book online** by [clicking here]
  c. **Video Visits** are now available for [insert appointment types]. Telemedicine has proven very effective to get care without having to come into the office. You can access our telemedicine service and have an appointment with your physician here.
- **At the time of your appointment**
  a. **Check-in Process:** [Outline your practice's check in process. This can include things like: stay in your car until we text or call you when your doctor is ready to see you, masks are available upon entering the office so please take one prior to entering, complete all intake forms prior to entering the office]

We understand that many of our patients are hesitant to seek in-person care during the pandemic, but please know that we have introduced many additional in-office safety measures, detailed below:
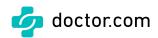
- **Disinfection and cleaning:** Our offices are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized each day as well as in between each patient visit.
- **Social Distancing:** We are social distancing patients in the office by having all patients wait in their cars until the start of their appointment, so you will not need to sit in a waiting room with other patients.
- **Temperature Checks**: All patients will have their temperature checked before entering the office.
- **Staff and patient protection:** All staff will be wearing masks and gloves. We ask the same for patients as well to help prevent spread of the coronavirus, and will provide masks and gloves for patients who do not have one.
- **Visitors**: For your safety, there are limitations on visitors. Each patient may bring one person with them, who will be required to go through the same temperature and screening measures.
- **Telemedicine Visits:** In an effort to limit in-person visits, we will continue to offer telemedicine visits. If you're hesitant about coming in-person, we strongly encourage you to consider a telemedicine visit first to ensure that you are not delaying essential care. To schedule a telemedicine visit, call our office at [Practice Phone Number].

We hope you are staying safe and healthy during these difficult times. **[Practice Name]** remains committed to delivering the highest quality care to our patient community, and we're excited to offer increased care options to you and your family.

Please contact us at **[contact information]** if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

[Your Name and Contact Information]

Email Template: In-Person Pre-Appointment Reminder

Use Case: Reminding patients of any updated policies they should be aware of before coming into your office.

Audience: ~24 hours before a patient's appointment
Subject Line: Important information for your in-person appointment with [Practice Name]

Hi **[Patient Name]**,

We're looking forward to seeing you for your appointment at [Practice Address] tomorrow at [time of appointment].

Steps we're taking to prevent to keep our community safe

- **Disinfection and cleaning:** Our offices are thoroughly cleaned and sanitized each day as well as in between each patient visit. [Outline your cleaning and sanitization policy here]
- **Social Distancing:** [Provide any social distancing rules you are implementing]. Click here to learn more [Hyperlink to a webpage with more information if necessary]
- **Staff and patient protection:** All staff will be wearing masks and gloves. We ask the same for patients as well to help prevent spread of the coronavirus. [Outline your PPE and patient safety measures here].
- **Telemedicine Visits:** In an effort to limit in-person visits, we will continue to offer telemedicine visits. [Click here to learn more.]
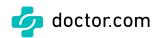
When you arrive

- **Check-in Process:** [Outline your practice's check in process. This can include things like: stay in your car until we text or call you when your doctor is ready to see you, masks are available upon entering the office so please take one prior to entering, complete all intake forms prior to entering the office]

Please contact us at **[contact information]** if you have any questions.

Stay safe and healthy,

[Your Name and Contact Information]

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Email Template: VirtualVisit Pre-Appointment Reminder

Use Case: Reminding a patient of any updated policies they should be aware of before a virtual appointment. Tell the patient how to prepare for the video call, and any steps they need to take before joining the appointment. The template below is customized for clients using Doctor.com's VirtualVisit, but please feel free to adjust for other systems you may be using.

Audience: ~24 hours before a patient's appointment
Subject Line: Important information for your upcoming virtual appointment with [Practice Name]

Hi **[Patient Name]**,

We're looking forward to seeing you for your virtual appointment tomorrow at [time of appointment].

Before your appointment
- Please email us [insert any forms, photos, or information you need for patient intake] before your appointment.
- We will send you an invite to your cell phone number at [cell phone number].
- Make sure you're able to use a supported device or browser for the call.

At the time of your appointment
- Please click to join the link you received. The link will start with **visit.doctor.com**.
- You will be sent to a page with a button that says **Join call.** Click this button to enter the waiting room.
- You will remain in the waiting room until [Doctor Name] begins the appointment.

If you have any questions or need help joining the virtual appointment, please contact us at **[insert contact information]**. We look forward to seeing you tomorrow!

Stay safe and healthy,

[Your Name and Contact Information]