



Newport Hospital and Health Services

714 W. Pine Street, Newport, WA • (509) 447-2441

www.NewportHospitalAndHealth.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Newport Community Hospital Resumes Elective Surgeries

NEWPORT – Friday Newport Hospital and Health Services (NHHS) announced a gradual restart of elective surgeries beginning May 18. The slow restart allows providers and surgical team to screen all patients for COVID-19 prior to their surgery date. Since Governor Inslee’s proclamation halted elective procedures and surgeries, NHHS has continued to perform urgent and emergent procedures and surgeries that would have otherwise caused harm to patients if delayed. NHHS physicians have been diligent with looking at each patient to determine this on a case-by-case basis.

Dr. Tim Chavis, NHHS Surgery Medical Director, said, “Our policy for resuming elective surgery in the wake of COVID-19 was constructed after considering the recommendations offered by the American College of Surgeons and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, while ensuring compliance with the recent Proclamation issued by Governor Inslee regarding this matter. We are fortunate that in Pend Oreille County we are not in an endemic area of disease as evidenced by only two reported positive cases during the pandemic. We feel safe offering elective surgical procedures at this time while using measures to ensure the safety of both hospital personnel and the general public.”



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The policy outlines each step of the elective surgeries restart and will remain in effect until the hospital district receives an official declaration that the COVID-19 pandemic has ended. A decision could be made to re-enter the mitigation phase of operation if local COVID-19 rates increase. In addition to patient screening, the policy also outlines further details for room cleaning and attestation of adequate personal protective equipment (PPE) on-hand for anticipated surgical case load as well as COVID-19 surge potential.

Patients considered for elective surgery must provide a negative laboratory test for COVID-19 no less than three days and no more than seven days prior to their procedure. Valid test results will then be reviewed and submitted to NHHS medical staff by the laboratory manager and infection control. For patients with a history of COVID-19 infection, elective surgeries or procedures should be delayed for four weeks after recovery (defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms).

Surgical patients must also attest that they are asymptomatic of common COVID19 symptoms including: cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell. Also, they should not have had known contact with any COVID-19 positive patient for at least 14 days prior to their COVID-19 testing.



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Community members awaiting surgery amidst the pandemic should consult with their primary care provider or surgeon's office to answer any specific questions regarding their surgical scheduling, procedure, and pre-operative screening.

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