



## **ELECTIVE SURGERY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: What You Need to Know**

### **How has Bozeman Clinic determined that is now safe to begin scheduling surgeries or procedures?**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Bozeman Clinic has continued to perform essential surgeries and procedures for patients with whom a delay could be detrimental. We have been weighing the risk of delay against the benefit that can be achieved by moving forward with the care plan on an ongoing basis for all planned surgeries and procedures. Our providers and clinic team have taken measures to help ensure the safety of all patients at Bozeman Clinic and after considerable research and communication with other physicians, we are reassured that elective surgeries and procedures can be done safely at our office.

### **Does surgery make me more likely to get COVID-19?**

No, having a surgery or procedure does not increase your chances of developing COVID-19. Our infection prevention practices and protocols are aimed at protecting our patients, providers and staff. Everyone, including employees and visitors entering the hospital and clinic, will be screened for symptoms and known high-risk exposures. Everyone will be required to wear a mask as a way to contain their respiratory secretions and to prevent spread of infection to others.

### **How does COVID-19 affect my recovery from surgery?**

We want to perform your surgery or procedure in the safest possible circumstances. One of our health care members will reach out ahead of time to ask you about possible symptoms of COVID-19, to ensure that we are not performing any surgery or procedure when you are sick.

Please let us know if you have had close exposure to someone who is known to have, or suspected of having, COVID-19 (such as a household member or caregiver), as we may need to adjust our plans to reflect this.

### **Can I postpone my surgery until the COVID-19 crisis is over?**

With any planned surgery or procedure, we must weigh the risk of delay with the benefit that can be achieved by moving forward with your surgery. In some situations, it may not be safe to delay further. Additionally, Bozeman Clinic as well as health systems nationwide will likely continue to be affected by COVID-19 for many months to come.

Your provider and their team are working hard to assess whether your surgery can be safely performed or should be postponed. If you are wondering if your surgery can be postponed until after the COVID-19 crisis is over, asking your provider directly is a good way to begin a discussion on whether or not this can be done safely.