Hello! How are you all doing? We have been very impressed with how flexible and understanding each of our patients has been during this unprecedented time, and we hope that you are physically and mentally well. We have witnessed a real change in people’s behavior and habits – one month ago many of us were hesitant to wear face masks or felt strange not offering our hand to shake. Today we routinely wear face masks, wash our hands more frequently, and maintain safe physical distance whether in a medical setting or at the grocery store! The hard work of social distancing is in fact making a real impact – Yale New Haven Hospital is seeing a decline in cases system-wide, and Connecticut overall is anticipating a gradual decline over the coming weeks.

With this decline, we are starting to plan for a careful and safe resumption of usual office visits. All of our doctors remain healthy, and we cannot wait to get back to the best part of our jobs – patient care! As such, we have some updates:

**OFFICE HOURS**: It's not quite “business as usual” (keep reading to learn about important safety precautions we are taking), but starting **Monday, May 4 we are going to resume normal office hours 8am – 5pm**. We are also opening up all of our offices – we can once again see you in Shelton, New Haven, Guilford and Essex. We will return to seeing healthy patients for routine visits – as long as you feel comfortable coming to see us, we are happy to see you. As usual, please call us to schedule both urgent and non-urgent appointments during our usual office hours. Please try to limit after-hours calls to true emergencies to keep our providers available to care for our laboring patients and emergencies.

**CORONAVIRUS SCREENING**: You will receive a call prior to your appointment screening you for recent travel, symptoms of COVID-19 and recent contacts with confirmed or suspected COVID-19. This screening will be repeated upon your arrival at our office. **Please do not come to our office if you have any concern that you may be affected by coronavirus. Furthermore, if you are in a high-risk group (age greater than 65 years old, chronic medical conditions), please consider rescheduling for a later date.**
INFECTION CONTROL: We have implemented increased infection control procedures, including minimizing time in the waiting room and increased surface cleaning and sanitizing. You may notice that we have rearranged our waiting rooms to ensure safe social distancing, and we will make every effort to move you as quickly as possible to an exam room.

FACEMASKS: Very good data supports the efficacy of facemasks in reducing the risk of transmission of COVID-19. As such, to protect both you and our staff, we will routinely wear facemasks while interacting with you. We also ask that you wear a facemask to your appointment. We believe this added layer of protection is appropriate and will protect both you and us. You do not need the highly discussed N95 mask – a regular surgical mask or homemade fabric facemask is just fine. If you need a facemask please let us know, we have a limited supply of extra masks that we can give to you.

NO VISITORS: Without exception, all patients are asked to come to all office appointments unaccompanied, including partners and children. This includes appointments in our office as well as for all outpatient ultrasounds.

TELEHEALTH: We have had great success with Telehealth visits and are considering how we can continue to provide this service once we are seeing patients in the office. If a Telehealth appointment is preferable to you, please let our office staff know, and we will work to accommodate you.

SURGICAL PROCEDURES: Yale New Haven Hospital is in the beginning phases of planning the reopening of surgical services for all elective and semi-elective surgery. While the hospital anticipates resuming non-emergent surgeries toward the end of May, there is a considerable backlog of previously scheduled surgeries that may result in scheduling delays. If you have a planned procedure and would like to discuss likely timing, please call to schedule a time to speak with your physician.

RESCHEDULING APPOINTMENTS: Our staff with be reaching out to you via phone and/or MyChart to reschedule appointments that were cancelled in March and April. If you do not receive a phone call in the next few weeks and wish to book an appointment, please feel free to call our office.

This unprecedented time brings unusual challenges. We are making every effort to safely and carefully reopen our offices in order to provide you with medical care we all know to be essential to your health. We may face additional challenges as we move to resume more usual operations, so please continue to be patient with us and let us know how we can do better. As always, we are all in this together.
Warm Regards,

Thomas Hanson, MD FACOG
Musa Speranza, MD, FACOG
Steven Fleischman, MD, FACOG
Michael Reel, MD, FACOG
Margaret Baumbusch, MD, FACOG
Meagan Haynes, MD, FACOG
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