

From: Florida Podiatric Medical Association <fpmaalert@fpma.com>
Sent: Friday, March 13, 2020 4:47 PM
Subject: FPMA Alert: FPMA Presidential Message



FPMA Alert

March 13, 2020

FPMA Presidential Message

The Coronavirus and Its Effect on the Practice of Podiatry

If you would have told me two weeks ago that the Coronavirus would have a major effect on the U.S., I like most others would have discounted that statement. Today, the mass hysteria surrounding this virus has resulted in the closing of Disney, Universal Studios, and all public universities in the state. In addition, it has shut down sporting events, including the PGA, MLB, NBA, and NCAA.

At the time I am writing this, there are a total of 1,700 cases of Coronavirus in the U.S. (population: 331 million) and 40 cases in Florida (population: 31 million). The mortality rate is currently:

- 0% for ages 0 - 9
- 0.2% for ages 10 - 39
- 0.4% for ages 40 - 49
- 1.3% for ages 50 - 59
- 3.6% for ages 60 - 69

- 8% for ages 70 - 79
- 14.8% for ages 80+

(Source: CDC.gov)

Having diabetes increases the mortality rate by 4%. Unfortunately, many of our practices treat these high-risk senior patients. In our practice, we have already had cancellations from elderly patients or family members calling and stating they are "at risk" for the Coronavirus. They have self-quarantined themselves, as is evident if you have gone to the store looking for cleaning supplies or toilet paper.

We all hope this will be short-lived and we can all get back to "normal". In the meantime, as business owners, we need to be prudent with expenses and track changes in patient volume and its effect on the bottom line. You should also check to see if your Business Owners Insurance policy has a clause for natural disasters affecting income. FPMA is at your disposal for any issues or concerns we may be able to help you with in the future.

Although the majority of our patients, staff, and colleagues will never develop the need to be tested for the Coronavirus, we must be proactive in showing our patients that their safety and health is our utmost priority. We must also let them know that we sanitize our offices in common contact areas and treatment rooms, and educate our staff on these measures as well as proper methods of hand washing. To many of our patients, we are viewed as a Primary Care Provider and Health Advisor. Now is our time to shine as a profession.

Samir Vakil, DPM
President, FPMA

Florida Podiatric Medical Association | 410 N. Gadsden Street | Tallahassee, FL 32301

