

# Newsletters from IAMACF

Author: Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP, Chairperson, IAMACF

March 15, 2020

Dear Friends,

All of us are aware of the recent Corona Virus infection in our communities and the impact this is having on the global economy. Apart from how it has affected us severely, it has brought our life-styles to a standstill. Although we had an inkling of how this infection could impact our lives, this virus did not give us the sufficient time to be prepared to handle it effectively. Unfortunately, we are also in the era where misinformation and fake news could spread faster than the virus itself and cause more damage.

Attached is a flyer from Senator Julie Morrison's social media. It has comprehensive information on the current situation. Also, below are the links that I received from Senator Steans office:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#symptoms>

<http://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>

[https://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2020\\_03/20200310.html](https://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/pressroom/2020_03/20200310.html)

I have written letters to Senator Steans and Senator Morrison urging for increased Federal funding for the free and charitable clinics. Illinois has 64 cases out of 708 Persons Under Investigation (PUI). Hopefully these numbers will plateau and the curve will flatten soon if we follow the guidelines on SOCIAL DISTANCING and encourage our friends and family to do the same. Please do not hesitate to share this write up, flyer, and the links with everyone.

These are unprecedented times and we are in uncharted territory. As always, please feel free to reach out to me should you have any questions. I'll be happy to discuss.

Stay informed and Stay tuned!

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP  
Chairperson IAMACF

March 17, 2020

Hi All,

This is the follow up email to the email that I sent a few days ago. I am glad that many of you found it useful. The clinic administration is working hard to adhere to the current guidelines and also open the clinic for chronic disease management. Two of the questions that have been asked frequently:

***1. Can I use verbiage from my email to share with friends or on social media?***

***The answer is yes.***

***2. What should be done for patients with low suspicion - to be referred for testing or to provide supportive care at home?***

***The answer is the following:***

***For those with MILD SYMPTOMS and no known contacts or high risk travel, it's ok to continue to monitor at home. Especially, if they have no comorbidities, a positive test won't change much.***

***If someone is presumed to have a mild case, the tentative guideline we are using is: home for at least 7 days from onset of symptoms and for at least 24hrs fever free.***

***If significant symptoms, health issues, known exposure or high risk travel - we are sending almost everyone for evaluation and possible testing.***

As of now, IL has 160 positive cases and 1 death reported. Chicago Mayor's office and their Health Officer are doing daily live sessions on social media. Also, there is a webinar organized by IDPH tomorrow (3/18/20). Please feel free to share any suggestions or ask any questions.

Sincerely,

Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

March 19, 2020

Hi All,

I am writing this update based on all the queries I have received in the last few days and hope it answers your questions.

There are 422 patients and 4 deaths so far in State of Illinois.

Here is a link to the recent numbers from today-

<http://www.dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/diseases-a-z-list/coronavirus>

Attached to this email is also information on COVID Testing Decision Tree which could be used effectively for Triage and Treatment of Patients.

Governor Pritzker made a special request to all doctors in Illinois to register on SIREN.

Below is the link-

<https://www.siren.illinois.gov/>

I registered few hours ago and it takes only few minutes to complete it.

### **Below are the Resources for Telemedicine/Health-**

**Capstone Health Network** - <https://www.capstonehealthnetwork.com/>

**Zoom for Healthcare:** Video conferencing for telehealth - Zoom for telehealth reliably delivers consistent clinical user experiences, seamlessly integrates into your technology and workflows, and keeps you connected and compliant. With high quality video, even in low-bandwidth environments, organizations can support healthcare teams and patients around the globe.

For more information: <https://zoom.us/healthcare>

**Doxy.me:** The simple, free, and secure telemedicine solution

For more information: <https://doxy.me>

**Call 4 Health:** Has a wide range of services available including Nurse Triage, Telemedicine, Answering Services, Appointment Scheduling and more.

For More information: 855-244-3258, [www.call4health.com](http://www.call4health.com)

The key concept is "SOCIAL DISTANCING". Please check on any elderly people in your neighborhood frequently.

Sincerely,

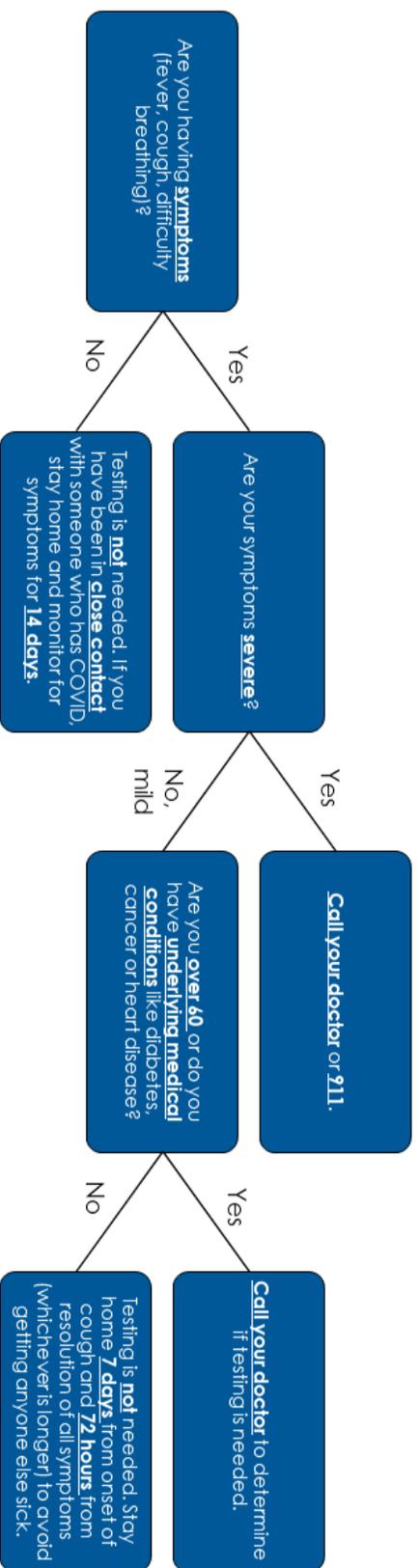
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.

Chairperson, IAMACF

(630) 853 9304

# Testing for COVID-19

Currently, there is no treatment or cure for COVID-19. Except for individuals in high-risk groups, like people over 60 or with underlying medical conditions, the illness is mild and can be safely managed at home. Testing is **only** indicated for people who fall into high-risk groups. It's important that we all follow these testing guidelines to protect healthcare workers and avoid spreading the virus in our communities.



March 21, 2020

Hi All,

Attached are pictures of Chana Dal in the making and in it's final form. The exact wording from Dr. Karen O'Mara is:

*I am in the midst of making a beautiful Chana Dal with plenty of immune supporting seasonings and vegetables. ... My beautiful final dish. Chana Dal over organic brown basmati rice contains so many colorful vegetables and healthful seasonings. Add a dollop of immune enhancing yogurt?*

Karen is a dedicated and passionate volunteer physician at the IAMACF. Dr. O'Mara, many thanks for sharing this with us. This is very uplifting!!

As we are amidst making those changes to our daily life - work from home, home schooling, online learning, online book clubs, etc., please know that you are not in this alone.

Mental Health has become vital in the current setting. You could call 311 for well-being check to check on vulnerable people. Personnel at 311 will connect you to National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) has extended license renewal period for physicians and other professions from July 31 to Sep. 30. They have also sent guidelines on COVID-19 to all Illinois licensed professionals. If any of you has not received it, please let me know and I'll be happy to share it with you.

It was heartening to see some of my friends join watching Dr. Arwady's daily show with me on social media. There is no break over the weekend and there'll be a show tomorrow too.

Terms such as "Flatten the Curve" may not be understood by many people. Try to keep the messages simple, such as "Stay at Home and Stay Healthy". Please also note that COVID-19 infection may present with gastro-intestinal symptoms and these patients are sicker. I am exploring the option of extending tele-health at the IAMACF clinic and would appreciate any input on this.

If people ask what supplies are needed at home, answer should be - prescription medicine, regular cleaning supplies such as soap and water. Advise to not stock up on water or food, and also to avoid PANIC BUYING.

Self-care is as important as helping others in the community. Be safe and be well.

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF



March 23, 2020

Hi All,

Happy Spring!

I want to start by quoting a short story shared by my friend. This is about how time flies as we age. I believe this story was narrated to her by her mother.

*Between the ages of 1 to 10, it seems as though time is moving at 10 mph  
In 20s, at 20 mph  
In 30s, at 30 mph  
... so on and so forth.*

Children are a significant part of the society who are getting affected by the current pandemic. For them, the days could feel very long. Especially with the school closures, engaging children during the day could become challenging and difficult. Many of them do not comprehend the precautionary measures that we adults take for their safety.

Please help them understand the gravity of the situation and use creativity to convey the messages related to the precautions.

Thanks to everyone who responded to help me with exploring tele-health! I'll be following up with you.

Earlier this evening, I wrote a letter to Congressman Mike Quigley in support of Free and Charitable Clinics (FCC).

As always, please feel free to contact me.

Be Safe and Well!

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP  
Chairperson, IAMACF

March 25, 2020

Hi All,

I received some updated information from IDPH and CDPH today.

I've been trying to get flyers about Corona Virus in Indian languages for the last to weeks, and got them from CDPH today. Attached are those informational flyers in four languages - English, Spanish, Hindi, and Gujarati.

Please feel free to distribute them.

I am also a part of American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) COVID help-line. This help-line is receiving many good questions.

Keep washing your hands and take a breaks from watching TV :-)

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP  
Chairperson, IAMACF

# Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) What You Need to Know

**The Coronavirus can infect anyone.**

## How does it Spread?



Through droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes



Close personal contact



By touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your own eyes, nose, or mouth

## What are the symptoms?



100+  
Fever



Coughing



Difficulty Breathing

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after contact with the virus

## How do I protect myself and others?



Stay home if you are sick except to get medical care



Avoid crowded places



Clean your hands often



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth



Cover your cough or sneeze

## What to do if you think you are sick



**Call your usual doctor or clinic.**  
**If you live in Chicago, call the Chicago Department of Public Health at 312-746-4835, 8am-8pm or 311.**  
Go to [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](https://www.chicago.gov/coronavirus) or [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus).

If you are experiencing stress or feel anxious, call 1-800-273-8255 24-hour hotline or NAMI Chicago at 833-626-4244. Support in several languages.



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# નોવેલ કોરોના વાયરસ (કોવિડ 19) મહત્વપૂર્ણ માહિતી "

કોરોનાવાયરસ કોઈપણને અસર કરી શકે છે

## વાયરસ કેવી રીતે ફેલાય છે



જ્યારે વાયરસથી પીડાતી વ્યક્તિને ઉધરસ અથવા છીંક આવે છે, ત્યારે તેના મોં દ્વારા બહાર કાઢવામાં આવતા શ્વાસ અથવા ગળકામાંનો વાયરસ બીજા વ્યક્તિમાં ગુસી જાય છે.



નજીકના સંપર્ક દ્વારા



વાયરસવાળી વસ્તુ અથવા ધારને સ્પર્શ કરીને તમારી આંખ, નાક અથવા મોંને સ્પર્શ કરવાથી વાયરસ તમારા શરીરમાં પ્રવેશ કરે છે.

## લક્ષણો શું છે?



100+  
100 ડિગ્રી તાવ



ઉધરસ



શ્વાસ લેવામાં મુશ્કેલ

વાયરસના સંપર્કમાં આવ્યા પછી 2-14 દિવસ પછી લક્ષણો દેખાઈ શકે છે

## હું મારી અને અન્યની સુરક્ષા કેવી રીતે કરી શકું?



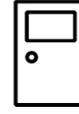
જો તમે બીમાર છો તો ઘરે જ રહો. ફક્ત તબીબી સંભાળ લેવા બહાર જાઓ



ભીડવાળી જગ્યાને ટાળો



તમારા હાથને વારંવાર સાફ કરો



વસ્તુઓ અને સપાટીઓ સ્વચ્છ અને જીવાણુનાશિત હોવા આવશ્યક છે, તેથી સાફ રાખો



તમારી આંખો, નાક અને મોંને બિનજરૂરી અડશો નહીં



તમારી ઉધરસ અને છીંક ને ઢાંકો

## જો મને લાગે કે હું બીમાર છું તો શું કરવું?



તમારા સામાન્ય ડોક્ટરને કોલ કરો અથવા ક્લિનિક પર જાઓ. જો તમે શિકાગોમાં રહો છો, તો 312-746-4835, (સવારે 8 થી સાંજે 8 સુધી) અથવા 311 પર શિકાગોના જાહેર આરોગ્ય વિભાગ પર કોલ કરો. વેબસાઇટ પર જાઓ [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](http://Chicago.gov/coronavirus) અથવા [cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

જો તમે તણાવ અનુભવો છો અથવા બેચેન અનુભવો છો, તો 1-800-273-8255 24-કલાકની હોટલાઇન પર કોલ કરો. સહાય બહુવિધ ભાષાઓમાં ઉપલબ્ધ છે.



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# नावेल कोरोना वायरस (कोविड १९) महत्वानि जानकारी

## वायरस कैसे फैलता है



जब वायरस वाली व्यक्ति खासी या छिनक करता है तब उसके मुख द्वारा निकला हुआ सांस या छींटे अन्य व्यक्ति तक वायरस पहुंचाते है



नजदीकी संपर्क द्वारा



वायरस वाली चीज या किनारी को छूकर अपने आँख, नाक या मुँह को छूने से वायरस आप के शरीर में प्रविष्ट होता है

## लक्षण क्या हैं?



100+  
डिग्री बुखार



खाँसना



सांस लेने में मुश्किल

वायरस के संपर्क के 2-14 दिनों बाद लक्षण दिखाई दे सकते हैं

## मैं अपनी और दूसरों की रक्षा कैसे करूँ



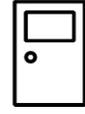
अगर आप बीमार हैं तो घर पर रहें। केवल चिकित्सा देखभाल प्राप्त करने के लिए बाहर जाएं



भीड़-भाड़ वाली जगह से बचें



अपने हाथों को बार-बार साफ करें



वस्तुओं और सतहों को साफ और कीटाणुरहित होना चाहिए, इसलिए सफाई रखें



अपनी आंखों, नाक और मुँह को अनावश्यक रूप से न छुएं



अपनी खांसी और छींक को कवर करें

## अगर मुझे लगता है कि मैं बीमार हूँ तो मुझे क्या करना चाहिए?



अपने सामान्य चिकित्सक को बुलाएं या क्लिनिक जाएं  
यदि आप शिकागो में रहते हैं, तो शिकागो के सार्वजनिक स्वास्थ्य विभाग को 312-746-4835, 8 am-8pm या 311 पर कॉल करें।  
वेबसाइट पर जाएं [Chicago.gov/coronavirus](http://Chicago.gov/coronavirus) या [cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://cdc.gov/coronavirus)

यदि आप तनाव का अनुभव करते हैं या चिंतित महसूस करते हैं, तो 1-800-273-8255 24-घंटे की हॉटलाइन पर कॉल करें। कई भाषाओं में समर्थन



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# Nuevo Coronavirus (COVID-19) ¿Qué necesita saber?

**El coronavirus puede infectar a cualquier persona.**

## ¿Cómo se propaga el Coronavirus?



Una persona puede contraer el coronavirus a través de las gotitas respiratorias que se producen de la nariz o la boca que salen cuando una persona infectada tose, estornuda, o habla



Contacto cercano con otras personas



Al tocar una superficie o un objeto que tenga el virus y luego tocarse la boca, la nariz o los ojos

## ¿Cuáles son los síntomas de la COVID-19?



Fiebre



Tos seca



Dificultad para respirar

Los síntomas pueden aparecer entre 2 y 14 días después del contacto con el virus

## ¿Cómo me puedo proteger a mí y a otros?



Quédese en casa si está enfermo excepto para buscar atención médica



Evite los lugares con mucha gente



Lávese frecuentemente las manos con agua y jabón



Limpie y desinfecte frecuentemente los objetos y superficies que toque



Evite tocarse los ojos, la nariz y la boca



Cúbrase la boca cuando tosa o estornude

## ¿Qué hacer si piensa que estoy enfermo?



### Llame a su médico de cabecera o a la clínica

Si usted vive en Chicago, llame al Departamento de Salud Pública de Chicago (Chicago Department of Public Health en inglés) al 312-746-4835, de 8 am a 8 pm o al 311.

Para obtener más información vaya a [chicago.gov/coronavirus](https://chicago.gov/coronavirus) o a [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus).

Si usted se siente sintiendo estresado o ansioso, llame al 1-800-273-8255 que está disponible 24 horas. Ayuda en varios idiomas.



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March 27, 2020

Hi All,

I am overwhelmed by all the positive responses that I have been receiving for these newsletters. Heartfelt thanks to all of you! We are adjusting to the new normal, and hope to return to the earlier normal as quickly as possible.

We at IAMACF, are trying our best to provide care for chronic disease patients who are currently unable to visit the clinic due to the pandemic emergency measures.

There is a study from India which claims that the Corona virus strain in India is less virulent than that in China and Nepal, which is in turn less virulent than the strain in Italy.

One of the frequently asked questions is, "How long does the corona virus survive on surfaces?". According to the World Health Organization (WHO) site,

"It is not certain how long the virus that causes COVID-19 survives on surfaces, but it seems to behave like other Corona viruses. Studies suggest that Corona viruses (including preliminary information on COVID-19 virus) may persist on surfaces for a few hours up to several days. This may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature, or humidity of the environment). If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with a simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others. Clean your hands with an alcohol based hand rub or wash them with soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth".

One of the key provisions included in the Senate Bill that the NAFC actively worked on is: **LIMITATION ON LIABILITY FOR VOLUNTEER HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS DURING COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE** - Extended protections under the Volunteer Protection Act of 1997 for Free and Charitable Clinics and Charitable Pharmacy Volunteers. This provision will sunset January 2021.

There is a speaking opportunity for a community member at an upcoming Chicago Department of Public Health webinar. Please let me know if anyone is interested in speaking, I can provide the details.

COVID-19 situation continues to be fluid and things are changing rapidly.

Closing this newsletter with a nice quote:

"We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But, the ocean would be less because of the missing drop" --Mother Theresa

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP  
Chairperson, IAMACF

March 29, 2020

Hi All,

Illinois saw a huge surge of 1,105 COVID-19 cases today. Currently, IDPH is reporting a total of 4,596 cases, including 65 deaths, in 47 counties in Illinois. The age of cases ranges from younger than one to 99 years.

My impression is that we are seeing the results of social distancing, and other measures that have been implemented (compare 4,596 with 11,943, which is the projected number of cases for 3/29).

We have to continue the measure to further slow the spread of the virus in the community.

For those who asked about 'Flattening the Curve', here is a snippet from a NYT article:

***The ideal goal in fighting an epidemic or pandemic is to completely halt the spread. But merely slowing it — mitigation — is critical. This reduces the number of cases that are active at any given time, which in turn gives doctors, hospitals, police, schools and vaccine-manufacturers time to prepare and respond, without becoming overwhelmed. Most hospitals can function with 10 percent reduction in staff, but not with half their people out at once.***

***Some commentators have argued for getting the outbreak over with quickly. That is a recipe for panic, unnecessary suffering and death. Slowing and spreading out the tidal wave of cases will save lives. Flattening the curve keeps society going.***

I've been also asked about the sources of my information. I am gathering information from CDC, WHO, IDPH, CDPH, and scientific journals. Please feel free to let me know if you find any inaccuracies :-)

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

March 31, 2020

Hi All,

In today's newsletter, I wanted to share some information on R0 (pronounced as "R naught").

The basic reproduction number (R0) is intended to be an indicator of the contagiousness or transmissibility of infectious and parasitic agents. R0 is often encountered in the epidemiology and public health literature and can also be found in the popular press. R0 has been described as being one of the fundamental and most often used metrics for the study of infectious disease dynamics. An R0 for an infectious disease event is generally reported as a single numeric value or low-high range, and the interpretation is typically presented as straightforward; an outbreak is expected to continue if R0 has a value  $>1$  and to end if R0 is  $<1$ . The potential size of an outbreak or epidemic often is based on the magnitude of the R0 value for that event, and R0 can be used to estimate the proportion of the population that must be vaccinated to eliminate an infection from that population. R0 values have been published for measles, polio, influenza, Ebola virus disease, HIV disease, a diversity of vectorborne infectious diseases, and many other communicable diseases.

**R0 FOR THE CORONA VIRUS IS BETWEEN 2 AND 2.5, COMPARED TO 18 FOR MEASLES.**

Recently, I wrote a letter for AAPI advocating wearing masks by everyone when they go into the community to slow the spread of COVID-19. This is an additional measure to social distancing. Wearing masks has showed success in curbing the spread of COVID-19 in countries such as Japan and Czech Republic.

Today, I received two alerts requesting all licensed medical professionals to signup for the IllinoisHelps.net. Chicago Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) is a network of both medical and non-medical professionals who volunteer their time to assist during public health emergencies such as the current COVID-19 outbreak. Many MRC volunteers are just like you - nurses, doctors, pharmacists, therapists, public health professionals, and other community members who believe in keeping Chicago safe. Register at [illinoishelps.net](http://illinoishelps.net) and be there when Chicago needs you most.

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

April 2, 2020

Hi All,

It was a sad day today, grieving the death of a Chicago Police Officer due to COVID-19. People in the front lines of the battle with COVID-19 do face higher risks of infection and mortality. My sincere prayers to his family and friends.

One of the frequently asked questions is, "When will all this end?". The answer is, "I don't know".

Here is a useful resource, during physical distancing, from Chicago Citywide Literacy Coalition:

<https://tinyurl.com/VWfnba4>

I believe that everyone is working harder than normal during these times. If anyone is interested in helping the free clinic either through volunteering their time or through donations, please contact me via email or phone.

Previous newsletters can be accessed from the Clinic Facebook Page,

<https://www.facebook.com/iamacf/>

Stay safe and healthy!

Sincerely,

Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP

Chairperson, IAMACF

Email: [lalithaksista@gmail.com](mailto:lalithaksista@gmail.com)

Phone: (630) 853-9304

April 4, 2020

Hi All,

Hope everyone is safe and doing well!

The clinic telephone system has been successfully restored. Today, I received 40+ phone calls from existing patients who have visited the clinic in the last few weeks, unaware of its closure despite website notices and flyers outside the facility.

Several patients needed refills and many enquired about future appointments. We took care of the refills and informed others. On a positive note, with a brief interview, none of them have any symptoms of COVID-19. Needless to say, all of them said that they miss the clinic. The downside to the filled prescriptions is the out-of-pocket expenses that the patients need to pay to the outside pharmacies along with the inconveniences of phone communication and transportation to pharmacies.

The clinic administration is meeting tomorrow to streamline the ongoing operations to serve the patients better during this crisis.

On a different note, I will be speaking at a Telemedicine meeting of the Refugee and Immigrant COVID-19 Webinar Series coordinated by the Northwestern University students. This event will take place on Monday, April 6th at 6pm-7pm CT. I will share the lessons learnt in my next newsletter.

Stay safe and healthy!

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

April 6, 2020

Hi All,

The clinic COVID-19 task-force had a productive meeting yesterday, and efforts are being made to restore free clinic services to the patients.

Prescription refills and phone triage are continuing. The clinic is also able to help immigrants affected by travel at this time.

It was great participating in the colloquium on Telemedicine for the Refugees and Immigrants. This series of webinars is timely and informative.

Please share funding resources, grants, your ideas, or any information that you think would benefit the clinic patients.

Latest numbers as of today:

There have been 5,043 cases of COVID-19 identified in Chicago residents so far and 12,262 in Illinois.

#### COVID-19 Morbidity and Mortality by Geography

GEOGRAPHY	CASES	DEATHS
Chicago	5,043	118
Illinois	12,262	307
U.S.	330,891	8,910
World	1,211,214	67,666

On the eve of World Health Day, I wish you all health and happiness. The tag-line for this year is, 'Support Nurses and Mid-wives'. Celebrate all the nurses and mid-wives tomorrow.

Be Safe and Be Well!

Sincerely,

Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

April 8, 2020

Hi All,

Hope everyone is safe and doing well!

In one of my previous newsletters, I mentioned the R0 number (which indicates how contagious the disease is) for Corona virus was 2.5. This is now estimated to be 5.7, which makes COVID-19 more contagious than what was originally projected.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention published new guidelines on Wednesday detailing how essential employees can go back to work even if they have been exposed to people infected by the Corona Virus, provided they do not feel sick and follow certain precautions.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>

On the general availability of testing for SARS-CoV-2, here is an update from FDA site:

*Q: Are there any tests that I can purchase to test myself at home for COVID-19?*

*A: At this time, the FDA has not authorized any test that is available to purchase for testing yourself at home for COVID-19. The FDA sees the public health value in expanding the availability of COVID-19 testing through safe and accurate tests that may include home collection, and we are actively working with test developers in this space.*

The community that the clinic serves has recorded higher number of cases in the last few days. In view of all these developments, the clinic will remain closed until May 2, 2020. We are looking into establishing Tele-Health services as soon as possible.

The phone triage and prescription filling activities are going on daily. Here is a note sent by one of our patients this week:

*"Thanks a lot for helping to get the prescriptions filled for my parents in law. It was really great job you guys are doing during this COVID-19 situation. Appreciate all your support and great work for our Indian community. Looking forward to get more updates from you on rescue flights to India with the help from our embassy. Thanks again!"*

Some of you have expressed an interest in donating to IAMACF. We greatly appreciate the gesture!

Please contact me and I'll be happy to facilitate the process.

Be safe and Be well!

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

April 10, 2020

Hi All,

Hope you are all doing well!

In this newsletter, I'll be sharing a few pictures of testimonials from the clinic patients. Thanks to Mr. Dave Vasudevan for prettifying the testimonial pictures on short notice! Also attached is a picture of an artwork (peacock), again by one of our clinic patients. It's very satisfying to see the positive feedback from those who we serve.

Through the guidance given by CDPH, we were able to successfully arrange a tele-visit to one of the patients who was detained, from returning back home, by the travel restrictions.

For healthcare providers serving immigrant patients with no insurance, AAPI has provided information pages at the following link: <https://www.aapiusa.org/covid-19/covid-19-telehealth-resources/>

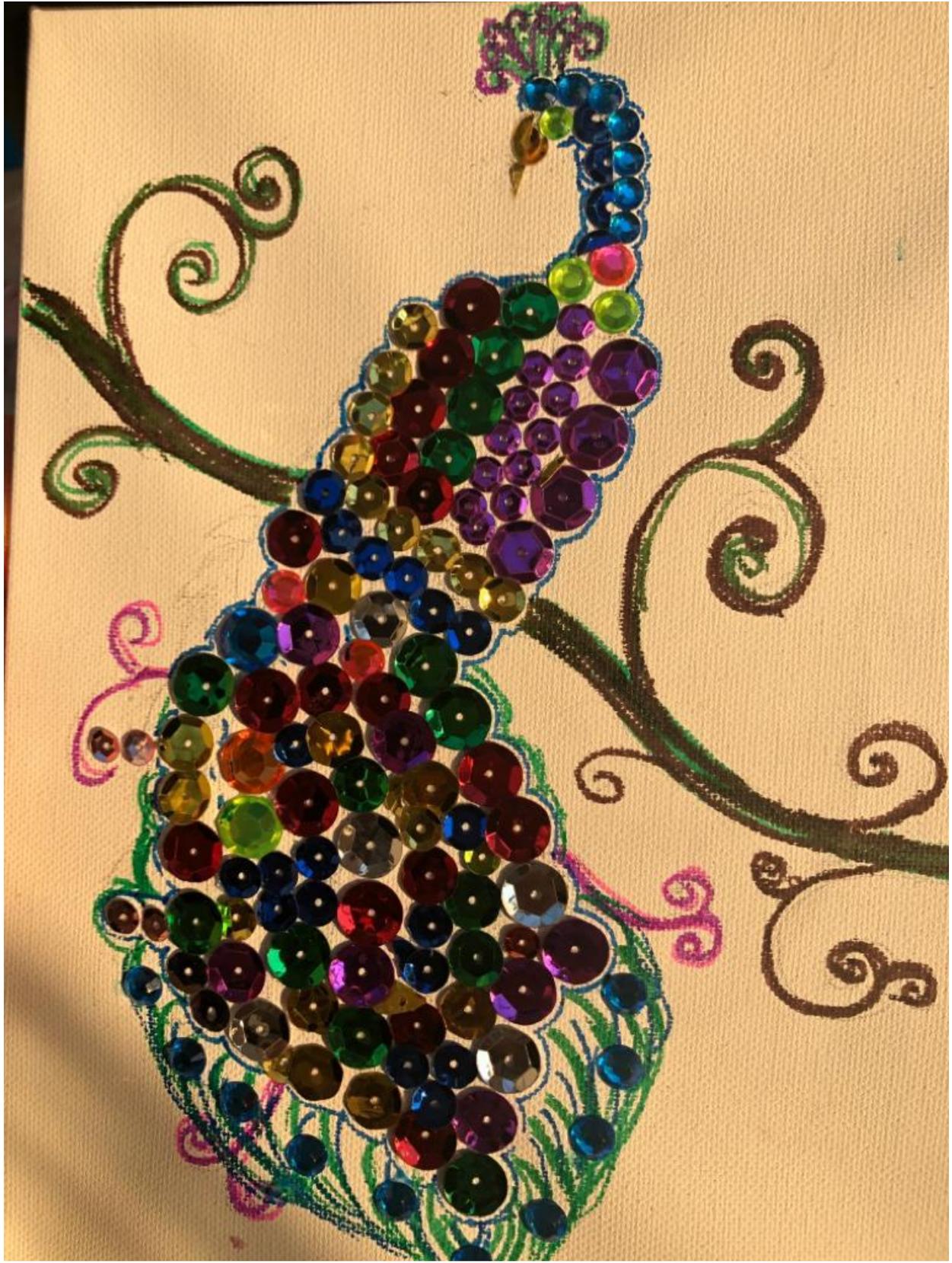
If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering at IAMACF, please pass-on the information to me.

One of the earlier newsletters featuring Dr. Karen O'Mara's Chana Dal recipe will be featured sometime this week on social media - #LETHOPERISE\_ILLINOIS

Be safe and Be healthy!

Sincerely,

Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF



I Tushif chandika came here with my aunt  
but the people here I don't know their names but  
they did some activities. And with that I enjoyed  
a lot. And I personally feel that what they taught  
is gonna be very helpful in my daily life.

Thank you, Thank you so much for all such

I Romana enjoyed being with  
Mansi, She is a great educator  
and bring improvement for patient with  
Diabetes

In the presentation I learned a lot about  
the human's health and what to eat. Before  
I didn't know a heart attack ~~was~~ happened  
from what you eat. I also enjoyed the  
food they were offering. When the lady showed  
pictures it gave me a better understanding  
of the amount of food you must eat. I  
believe there should be more stands like  
the one you guys did because it could  
help a lot of people today.

It was very interesting  
experience. , definitely I  
will change a lot of  
bad habits I use to follow  
she showed me how I  
eat and what I eat.  
Thanks.

April 12, 2020

Hi All,

Hope you are all doing well!

Please provide support to the healthcare workers and their families by showing compassion and words of encouragement.

I came across this link from WHO:

<https://openwho.org/courses?topic=COVID-19>

It lists all the different free courses offered by WHO in various languages.

Thanks to all the volunteers who reached out to my last post! I'll reach out to all of you.

With the Easter weekend coming to an end, here are the stats regarding the COVID-19 situation:

#### COVID-19 Morbidity and Mortality by Geography

GEOGRAPHY	CASES	DEATHS
Chicago	8,584	277
Illinois	20,852	720
U.S.	525,704	20,486
World	1,696,588	105,952

Be safe and Be well!

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

April 14, 2020

Hi All,

Hope you are all doing well!

Earlier this evening, I wrote a letter to Senator Dick Durbin asking for advocacy and support for Free and Charitable Clinics in the upcoming 4th Coronavirus Relief Package. The foundation is also applying for Emergency Fund Grants to various organizations and procuring equipment (BP monitors, PPE, Thermometers, etc.) for the clinic.

Here are two questions that are asked most frequently by clinic patients:

What are the different types of COVID-19 test?

The most common types of COVID-19 test are a molecular (PCR) test and serology (antibody) test. A PCR test shows whether the virus is present in the body and is typically done through nasal or throat swab. A serology test is a blood antibody test that shows if you have antibodies against COVID-19 and if you're immune to the virus, whether you developed any symptoms or not. At this time, the FDA has issued emergency use authorization (EUA) for only one COVID-19 antibody test and none have been validated for diagnosis. Antibody tests currently on the market might not be reliable and test results must be interpreted with caution.

What should I do if I don't have health insurance?

If you do not have a medical provider, are uninsured, or have limited or no income and believe you need non-emergency medical services, you can contact your nearest community health center (CHC) by phone and inform them of your need. They will work with you to coordinate appropriate care. In cases of emergency, please call 911. There are approximately 165 CHCs throughout the city of Chicago, so find one that is close to you. You can find your nearest CHC at [findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov](https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov).

Many thanks to Chicago Department of Public Health for providing us guidance during these tough times.

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

April 16, 2020

Hi All,

Hope you are all doing well!

Based on a few questions received from physicians about convalescent plasma, here is some information on it.

People who've recovered from COVID-19 have antibodies to the disease in their blood. This is called convalescent plasma. Researchers hope that convalescent plasma can be given to people with severe COVID-19 to boost their ability to fight the virus.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has outlined the requirements that individuals must meet to donate blood for this research. Before donated blood can be used, it must be tested for safety. It then goes through a process to separate out blood cells so that all that's left is plasma with antibodies.

The immediate goal of this research is to determine if convalescent plasma can improve the chance of recovery for people with the most severe disease. A second goal is to test whether convalescent plasma can help keep people who are moderately sick from getting sicker.

COVID-19 convalescent plasma has not yet been demonstrated to provide clinical benefit in patients affected by this disease. It is not known if this treatment will or will not help those with COVID-19 or if it will have any harmful effects. Based on preliminary data from small series of patients it appears safe and historical precedent with other respiratory infections the antibodies in convalescent plasma may provide therapeutic benefit.

Such a treatment would be a boon for people at high risk — such as with underlying medical conditions, as well as family members and health care workers who have been exposed.

<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19/recovered-covid19-patient-plasma-request>

A complete list of blood donation centers in IL is here:

<https://ilabb.org/Donation.html>

The clinic phone line remains open for patients. So far, about 15+ medication refills have been completed. Many patients have availed of the discounted prices given by coupons from GoodRx, which were honored by Walmart, Walgreens, CVS, Marianos, etc.

There is a volunteer physician pool at AAPI, consisting of members across USA. The members of that pool are helping patients who are affected by the travel restrictions with medication refills, tele-medicine visits, and other services.

Please continue to share your feedback and questions.

Be safe and Be healthy!

Sincerely,

Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF

April 18, 2020

Hi All,

Hope you are all doing well!

A big shout out to Ms. Kanchan S, who went to the clinic today to run the virtual visits for our patients!!

Check out her picture from the clinic.

A big thanks to Chrysa and the students of New Life Volunteer Society (NLVS) for their help!

On to some optimistic news: (source: OBSERVER)

<https://observer.com/2020/04/gilead-sciences-remdesivir-covid19-drug-trial-result-promising/>

Remdesivir, an antiviral medicine, was one of the first experimental drugs used on severe COVID-19 patients as a “last resort” treatment. Early results from one of the two phase-three trials of remdesivir at the University of Chicago Medical Center this week found that most of the patients treated with the drug recovered in as little as six days.

Be safe and Be well!

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.  
Chairperson, IAMACF



April 20, 2020

Hi All,

Hope you are all doing well!

Here is an article that I created along with Dr. Edara from AAPI on 3/30/2020:

<https://us18.campaign-archive.com/?u=4ca1a7050d3b08ef7cff89b2f&id=60add00974>

It strongly advocates the use of face masks.

Something that I missed in the last newsletter, which I believe is a useful resource for the community:

Chicago Rx - The Chicago Rx Card is a free and easy way to save up to 80% on prescription drugs at more than 59,000 pharmacies across the country including Rite Aid, Kroger, Osco, CVS, Walmart, Walgreens and many more. No registration or pre-qualification needed. The card is free, pre-activated and can be used immediately! The Chicago Rx card can be used by individuals and family members regardless of a person's health, age, immigration status, or income, and there are no limits on how many times it can be used. Find out more at [www.chicagorxcard.com](http://www.chicagorxcard.com).

Be safe and Be well!

Sincerely,

Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP.

Chairperson, IAMACF

April 22, 2020

Hi All,

Hope you are all doing well!

Today is Lab Professional's Day.

A big shout-out to all the lab professionals who are bearing the enormous work load due to the current pandemic!

Here is a map and locations of the COVID-19 testing sites in Illinois:

<https://www.dph.illinois.gov/testing>

A very heartwarming piece of news from Connecticut.

A doctor of Indian origin gets a 100 car salute outside her residence for COVID-19 efforts:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYopbGke95Y>

I found an interesting statistic in a recent presentation from CDPH.

A preliminary finding, from their homeless shelter study, shows that 93% of the people testing positive for COVID-19 were asymptomatic.

Be safe and Be well!

Sincerely,

Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP  
Chairperson, IAMACF

April 24, 2020

Hi All,

Hope you are all doing well!

I am sharing a testimonial from a dedicated Physician volunteer, Dr. Susan Rhee.

Dear Dr. Darbha,

Here is some feedback I have on the NLVS and IAMFCF clinic, and the work that is being done by the staff and volunteers.

The clinic provides an essential service for local Chicagoans - providing quality care, including basic labs, medications, referrals, and specialty care (optometry, nutrition counseling, etc), for those who have the highest need - people who do not qualify or cannot afford any insurance or medicare/medicaid. Maintaining health is ALWAYS the more cost effective route to care for people, and this clinic provides the avenue to maintain health and avoid the serious consequences of untreated diabetes, heart disease, and other chronic and acute illnesses. This is of huge benefit to the community and to Chicago/Illinois, in addition to being the humane and ethically right thing to do.

The clinic provides a critical learning experience for our future doctors. Students from all the local medical schools learn not only disease diagnosis and management, but how to navigate the complicated US health system, especially for those lacking insurance. This is something truly unique, and not offered by many medical schools, including some of the top ivy league schools.

The clinic provides hands on management experience for the medical students involved in the board and on the committee. Learning how to run an effective clinic is a crucial lesson for them, that will serve them well in their future careers - it's an experience that these students are fortunate to have, as these skills will be important regardless of where they end up after they are done training. Learning cost effective measures on running a clinic, time and people management, grant writing, scheduling, and how to deal with complicated patients - these are all things that are not taught in medical school, yet are critical to understand and know as practicing physicians.

In short, I have the privilege of being able to participate in this wonderful experience, and look forward to continuing to do so, as the work being done by the clinic is important for the health and safety of our patients, for the education of our future medical leaders, and address some of the gaps in our fractured medical system.

Best regards,  
Susan Rhee, MD

Below is a link that has COVID-19 related information in multiple languages:

<https://www.equalitylabs.org/covid19guide?fbclid=IwAR12zIGQNBinWrgZB9cwyvzSrv8E-kB4RIhm47Qlco0VszR-54cum1cW8Lo>

Be safe and Be well!

Sincerely,  
Lalitha Darbha MD, FACP  
Chairperson, IAMACF