**Accessing GP care during the Omicron outbreak**

Aroha mai, [Name of practice] is currently under a lot of pressure providing remote care for a high number of COVID-19 patients who are self-managing their illness at home. Some of our team members are in isolation with their whānau, so we’re also short staffed.

**We are still here for you though so please don’t put off getting in touch if you’re unwell.** Some health concerns can’t wait for COVID-19 to pass, and will become more serious if they don’t get attention. We are inundated with phone calls, so it will take longer than usual to get through. We’re also doing things a bit differently to ensure people get the right medical care as soon as possible.

**Here’s what you can expect**

* It will take some time to get through to the practice. Please consider leaving a message for a call back, or using the patient portal to access your medical records, view test results and order repeat prescriptions.
* A doctor will discuss your concerns during a phone triage call to decide on the most appropriate way to meet your needs. Sometimes a nurse will be able to help.
* Some GP consultations will be available for people who need to be seen kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face). There will probably be a longer than usual wait time to get an appointment.
* If you are coming in for a face to face appointment, you may be asked to wait in your car or use a different part of the building. Our staff will be wearing personal protective gear because we’re trying to keep everyone as safe as possible.
* Doctors will also be booking virtual consultations, which allow you to have a telephone or video appointment from home.
* Routine or non-urgent appointments may be postponed at short notice.
* After hours virtual consultations are available through Practice Plus. Find out more or book an appointment at www.practiceplus.nz.
* Emergency departments remain available for emergencies.
* If it’s not an emergency, you can call Healthline on 0800 611 116 for free 24-hour health advice or find health information at [www.healthnavigator.org.nz](https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/).
* You can go to a pharmacy to ask for advice on minor medical issues or health concerns.

Thank you for your patience. We want everyone to receive the care they need, and we’re doing our best to make that happen.

**If you have COVID-19**

* If you’re having trouble registering your test result online or over the phone, please let us know so we can make sure you get the right care.
* You can leave isolation after 7 days, if you have no symptoms. You do not need a RAT test after 7 days to prove you no longer have it, and we don’t provide them for this purpose.
* For extra support please contact the COVID-19 welfare line on 0800 512 337 seven days a week.