

# Enhance Patient Care During COVID-19 and Beyond

The COVID-19 pandemic is highlighting how **you can continue to provide excellent patient care**...especially in a stressful time.

Use these tips to improve your patient care and customer service skills during this crisis...and beyond.

**Start off on the right foot**...first impressions set the stage for how patients perceive you and your pharmacy.

Consider your choice of words, tone, and body language when you greet patients and answer the phone.

For example, saying "How may I help you today?" shows you're interested in the patient's care. But simply asking "Dropping off?" or "Picking up?" may imply you just want to get a task done.

Speak clearly and loudly if needed, especially if you're wearing a mask...and ask patients to repeat back info to ensure understanding.

**Make it personal**...to build trust and loyalty. This helps patients feel like an individual, not just a number.

Use the patient's name when speaking with them...and sincerely ask how they're doing or if they have everything they need.

Demonstrate patience and empathy...even when you get the same questions about hand sanitizer, masks, etc. Being calm and understanding can go a long way.

**Stay ahead of problems**...and keep patients in the loop.

Anticipate patients' needs by trying to have enough meds in stock...and contact patients early about Rx issues (insurance, etc).

Focus on what you CAN do...instead of what you can't.

For instance, say "I can get your medication in on Monday and call you when it's ready" instead of "I can't get this until Monday."

**Go the extra mile**...by offering more than expected if possible.

Gather needed OTCs...and offer services, such as Rx delivery or med sync...to show how your pharmacy goes beyond filling Rx's.

**Take good care of yourself too**...providing top-notch patient care can be demanding. Have a plan to prevent burnout...so that you can better care for your patients.

Polish your communication, empathy, and other essential skills for excellent patient care with our *Soft Skills* toolbox.

## Key References:

-<https://acpinternist.org/archives/2017/11/customer-service-can-make-or-break-a-practice.htm> (4-28-20)

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