

BORS and COVID-19 Information for patients

Dr Deb Mills 17/3/2020

Dear Participant

You are due to return for your day 60, 63, and 67 visits as part of the BORS research project.

The need to 'flatten the curve' of the COVID-19 pandemic has meant restrictions of travel and other activities. This outbreak was of course completely unexpected. For further info see our blog <https://www.thetraveldoctor.com.au/why-is-covid-19-such-a-big-deal/>

As a result we may need to make some amendments to the timing of your visits. We do not know when the situation with COVID-19 will improve, but it may be many months before all restrictions and recommendations are lifted.

The BORS study protocol requires all three of the follow up visits (60, 63, and 67) to be done within a week, but it is less critical *when* that week occurs, so the three visits can be delayed – for months if needed – as long as they are done within a week. Your visits to the clinic are non-urgent, so we would like you to consider the following:

- If you just wish to delay your three follow-up visits until after things settle, we can accommodate this – please let us know – ring the clinic 07 3221 9066 or email <clinic@thetraveldoctor.com.au>
- You should not come to the clinic if you have travelled overseas in the last 14 days, or if you have any symptoms of respiratory infection – fever, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, aches in muscles or joints, runny nose, etc. Please ring the clinic for advice.
- If you have been overseas recently and returned to Australia after 12:01 hours on Monday 16 March 2020, it is mandatory that you self-isolate for 14 days as per the new government regulations announced on 15 March 2020.
- If you are over 65 and/or have pre-existing medical problems, we would recommend that you delay your visits because travelling to our clinic in the city may involve exposure to lots of people, e.g. in public transport or the crowded streets.
- If you wish to proceed as scheduled, please be advised we have all recommended infection control procedures in the clinic to limit any possible spread. Our clinic is a specialist travel medicine clinic and we rarely have sick patients, so the risk of being infected at our clinic is much lower than at a GP clinic or hospital waiting room. If you are happy to proceed as planned, we offer the following recommendations:
 1. When you do come for your visits - please consider taking private transport. We advise against taking public transport to come to the city for your appointment as all exposure to crowds should be avoided at this time.
 2. Please be on time for your appointment so that your time in the waiting room is kept to a minimum. If your transport brings you to the city well before your appointment time. You may care to walk around in the open air in Anzac park across the road.

Thank you very much for participating in our research project and thank you for your understanding of these new recommendations. If you have any questions, please contact the clinic ph 3221 9066.

Kind regards

Dr Deb and the research team