



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Claude Brunson, MD, Mississippi State Medical Association, clbrunson@msma.org, (662) 833-6700
Jason Thompson, Fahrenheit Creative Group, LLC, jason@fahrenheitcreative.com, (662) 833-6700
Liz Sharlot, Mississippi State Department of Health, lsharlot@msdh.ms.gov, (662) 833-6700

Mississippi State Medical Association and Mississippi State Department of Health Urge Physicians to Delay Elective Surgery During COVID-19 Pandemic

JACKSON, Miss. – The Mississippi State Medical Association (MSMA) strongly supports the Mississippi State Department of Health (MSDH) recommendation for all physicians and providers to delay all elective surgery and invasive procedures during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and American College of Surgeons recently issued similar recommendations, encouraging hospitals, health systems, and surgeons to delay inpatient, elective surgical and procedural cases and to reschedule elective and non-urgent surgeries.

Delaying these procedures and visits will help reduce potential exposure to COVID-19 for patients and staff, which is aligned with the current national and state recommendations for social distancing. The CDC’s primary goals during the COVID-19 outbreak include minimizing disease transmission, protecting healthcare personnel, and preserving healthcare system functioning. Delaying elective surgery supports these important goals and helps keep patients and healthcare employees safe, which should be our primary objective as we respond to this pandemic. Importantly, this recommendation helps to preserve personal protective equipment (PPE), which minimizes potential exposure to COVID-19 for patients, physicians, and other healthcare professionals.

“It’s very important to take every precaution to prevent patients from contracting COVID-19,” said State Health Officer Thomas Dobbs MD, MPH. “These measures will keep Mississippians safe, and they will also preserve critical medical supplies.”

The U. S. Surgeon General, Dr. Jerome Adams, has also advised that hospitals cancel elective surgeries in an effort to decrease the risk of spread of coronavirus within a medical center, protect hospital beds in case of a surge of coronavirus cases, decrease use of protective medical gear, and decrease risk to a hospital workforce who may be needed to respond to COVID-19.

“Physicians, providers, and the public must work together to reduce the potential impact of COVID-19 in the state, and delaying elective surgeries is an important step in helping to flatten the curve,” said Claude Brunson, MD, executive director of MSMA. “Taking decisive and immediate action on this issue will reduce the spread of the virus and increase the ability of our healthcare system to respond during this crisis.”

The most current and accurate information about the impact of COVID-19 in Mississippi is available on the MSDH website at www.msdh.ms.gov. MSMA continues to provide updated information, resources, and guidance about COVID-19 for physicians at www.msmaonline.com/covid-19 and on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

###

About the Mississippi State Medical Association

The Mississippi State Medical Association is the largest physician advocacy organization in Mississippi, representing nearly 5,000 physicians and medical students. Since 1856, MSMA has been a trusted health policy leader and professional development resource for physicians, representing the unified voice of physicians statewide on state and federal health care issues while providing information needed to navigate health care legislation and regulatory changes.