



## **Making the Most of a New Normal with COVID-19**

Lately everyone's experiencing new challenges as we adjust to life during a global pandemic. From a foot and ankle surgeon's standpoint, there are many issues that can arise. However, there are things you can do to not only manage your patient load and keep your staff safe, but to ensure your practice is thriving now and after the health crisis passes.

For some, the move to telemedicine and adjusting to a slower patient volume in the office means more downtime. While this is anxiety inducing for some, it doesn't have to be. New Jersey-based foot and ankle surgeon Maryellen Brucato, DPM, FACFAS suggests looking at the silver lining in the situation, "Instead of worrying about how slow your office is, be grateful to have the time to refocus and reorganize." She also adds, "Beyond COVID, we all need to be prepared to be extremely busy!"

Here are ways to take advantage of the downtime and thrive throughout this crisis to prepare for the "reignite."

- Develop a post-COVID-19 marketing plan – use the ACFAS Marketing Toolbox for help – [acfas.org/marketing](https://acfas.org/marketing)
- Write content for your blog or social media accounts so your posts will be ready to go and already done when you're busy seeing patients again
- Refresh and update patient handouts and patient education materials
- Participate in industry-led practice management webinars, including ones from the College
- Earn CME with ACFAS online educational resources—ACFAS OnDemand and new webinars are a great option to keep fresh – [acfas.org/OnDemand](https://acfas.org/OnDemand)
- Reach out to other healthcare specialists you know to make them aware you are open/still seeing patients
- See if your hospital has volunteer opportunities due to short staffing/overwhelming demand
- Feature local small businesses in your area on your socials to help get them more customers/followers

Dr. Brucato also suggests using this time to ramp up networking, improve patient education and outreach and work on long-term projects. "The connections you can make with your community during these tough times will have a long-term impact on your practice," she adds. "You'll be grateful you took advantage of the unprecedented time once we transition back into our normal routines."