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PERC NEWSLETTER



Psychosis Evaluation and Recovery Center (PERC)
 Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania
 Schizophrenia Research Center &
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 Neuropsychiatry Section

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<http://www.med.upenn.edu/bbl/penn-perc.shtml>

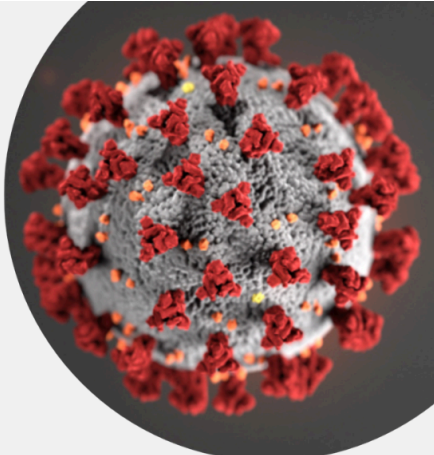
COVID UPDATE


As we begin this transition to a new sense of normalcy, it is important for us to keep in mind that the pandemic continues to be a serious public health issue and proper precautions still need to be taken to ensure the safety of ourselves and our community. As most of you are well aware, this includes wearing a mask in any public spaces, continuing to social distance at least 6 feet apart, and regularly washing your hands; especially after coming in contact with public surfaces. The current trends in the Greater Philadelphia area are encouraging, as positive corona virus tests appear to be on the decline. However, nationwide the trend is showing an increase in positive tests. As we venture out of the safety of our homes, it is vital for us to continue practicing the same precautionary measures that have helped to protect ourselves and our community from exposure to this virus.

As a refresher, here is a basic overview of the virus and how it spreads.

WHAT IS COVID-19


- Coronavirus disease 2019, or COVID-19, is a respiratory illness.
- Signs and Symptoms may include fever (>100.3°F), chills, muscle pain, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, headaches, and sudden loss of taste and smell.
- Symptoms can appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19.
- COVID-19 is caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2.



 PennEHRS
Environmental Health & Radiation Safety

HOW THE VIRUS IS SPREAD

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes. This is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
- COVID-19 can be spread by people 1-3 days before symptoms appear.**

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HOW TO PREVENT VIRUS SPREAD



PERC Clinic Update

As of June 1st, 2020, research operations began the initial phase of transitioning back to the Gates Pavilion. On July 6th, we entered in Phase II of the Safe Return to Campus plan set forth by the University. In regard to our clinical operations, most of PERC’s psychotherapy services will continue via Telehealth into the month of July. Urgent client needs that require an in-person session are given priority, as we are limited to 50% of our normal population density for our clinic. In-person outpatient psychotherapy services may resume in July, however this will depend on the evolving risk levels associated with successfully transitioning through each phase. As more information becomes available, further updates on the clinic’s return to normal operations will be provided.

The graphic below provides a brief summary of the University’s plan for a safe return to campus.

SAFE RETURN TO CAMPUS

	Ramp Down	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III
Population density	<10%	20%	50%	100% new normal
Research type	Essential	Essential + prioritized	Approved	All
Travel (per Penn policy)	None	None	Approved field research only	According to university policy
Telework	Most activity done remotely	All that is possible	All that is possible	When reasonable
Hygiene Masks, etc.	Required	Required CDC recommendations	Required CDC recommendations	
Undergrads	No	No	No	Yes
Grad Stud/Postdocs	Essential only	Voluntary	Voluntary	Yes

In preparation for returning to the campus and clinic, there may be necessary steps that you must follow to protect each person on campus. Before deciding to return, you must ensure that you are healthy. This means: taking your temperature every day before you come to campus, confirming that it is below 100.0F, and verbally attesting your understanding of symptom-free screening to our security officers. Please continue to familiarize yourself with the guidelines below. Thank you for your individual and collective efforts to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of our community.

Guidelines for a safe return to campus:

BEFORE you return:

1. Self-administer temperature check and self-conduct symptom-free screening
2. Anyone who is not feeling well should refrain from coming to campus and seek medical guidance as indicated
3. Anyone who has had close contact with a confirmed COVID-19 case must stay at home and self-isolate for 14 days after their last contact with the case even if they do not develop symptoms
4. Determine a safe travel plan to return to campus; updated parking information found [here](#)
5. If you are taking public transportation, please note that SEPTA riders are now required to wear face coverings starting today, Monday, June 8 (<http://septa.org/covid-19/mask-release.pdf>)

When you ARRIVE:

1. Wear a mask at all times
2. For anyone entering any of our buildings via the four consolidated entrance points, you will be explicitly asked by Security upon entrance to attest to the following:
 - You are symptom-free (including self-administered temperature check), consent to the opt-in health policy, and agree to comply with all safety measures on and between campuses, both inside and outside buildings
 - Adhere to the signage regarding guidelines on social distancing in common and shared areas, work spaces, entry and exit points, etc.
 - Practice good hygiene, remembering to wash your hands frequently
 - Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces

If you encounter situations which cause concern, please do not hesitate to inform a staff member, or confidential reporting concerns through the University's Confidential Reporting and Help Line

At ALL TIMES, whether on or off campus, please:

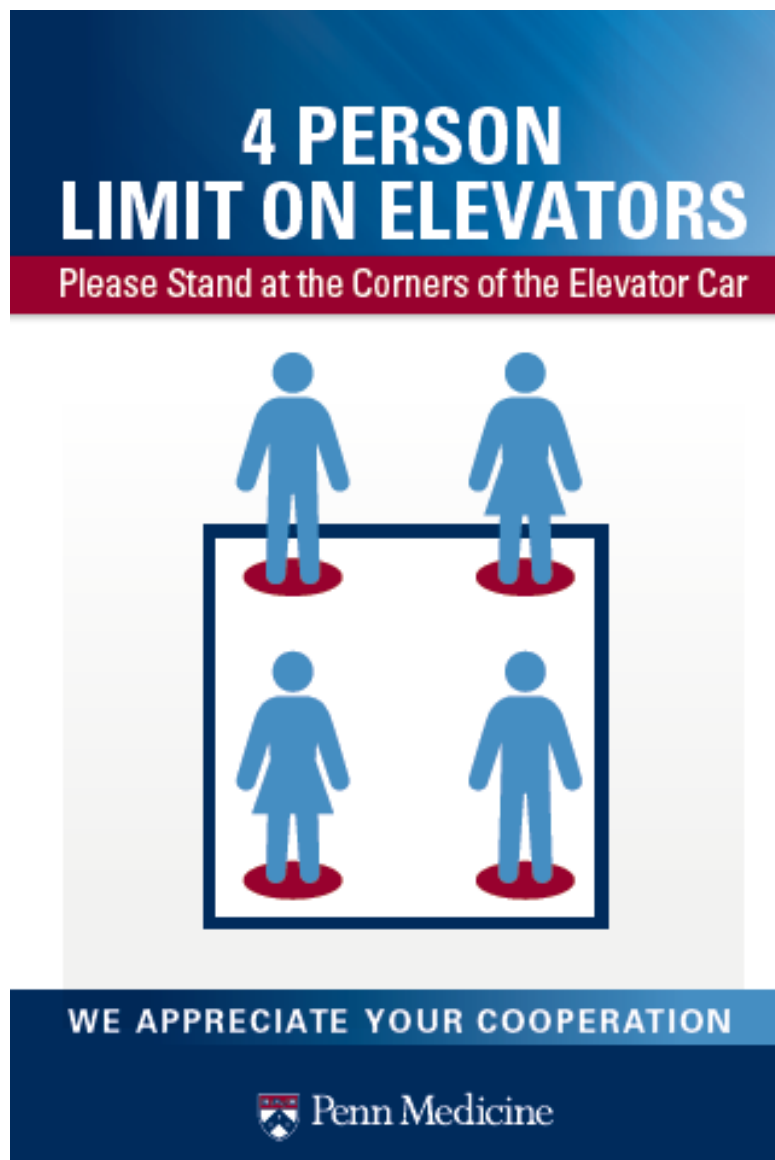
- Maintain strict social distancing of at least 6 feet, including in your work space
- Wear a mask if out in public
- Practice good hygiene, remembering to wash your hands frequently
- Please continue to familiarize yourself with the guidelines for a safe return to campus.

ELEVATOR USE

Use of elevators should be limited based on size to maintain social distance between individuals. In general, there should be a 1 to 4 person limit on elevators; when an elevator is carrying 4 people, please stand at the corners of the elevator car. Please face in one direction. Where possible, we encourage use of stairs.

If you are using the elevator, wear your mask or face covering, and avoid pushing the elevator buttons with your exposed hand/fingers; consider using the cap of a pen, your knuckle, or your elbow to push the elevator button.

Wash your hands thoroughly or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol upon departing the elevator.



RESTROOM USE

Use of restrooms should be limited based on size to maintain at least 6 feet distance between individuals. Whenever possible, we ask for no more than one person at a time in the restroom. Determine if it is occupied by opening the door slightly and asking before you enter. The general guidelines for keeping yourself and others safe in any environment are no different from what should be practiced in the restrooms, which include:

- Practice social distancing and wear a mask
- Avoid touching your face and do not spit
- Avoid loitering in common areas and setting down personal items
- Wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds
- Dry hands thoroughly
- Use a paper towel to turn off the sink and open the door to exit



Obey All New Signage

UNIVERSAL MASK POLICY



To protect the health & safety of essential employees, **everyone entering Penn's buildings, regardless of role, is required to WEAR A MASK**

WEAR & CARE

Penn-provided masks for essential employees should be stored & reused until they are torn, visibly soiled or otherwise damaged.


For additional information about how to use, reuse, remove & store masks, please visit the EHRIS website: <https://ehrs.upenn.edu/ehrs-covid-19-safety-information>

ESSENTIAL EMPLOYEE IN NEED OF A MASK?

Please visit the PSOM Security Operations Center at Stellar Chance Laboratories 1st Floor, Room 109

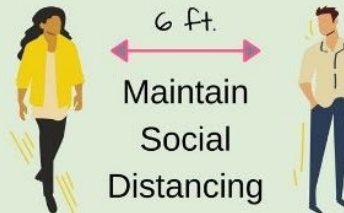
QUESTIONS? ✉ PSOMReady@pennmedicine.upenn.edu

Help FLATTEN the CURVE



6 ft.

Maintain Social Distancing



Penn Medicine

RESTROOM ETIQUETTE

HELP KEEP YOURSELF & OTHERS SAFE WHILE USING THE RESTROOM



PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING & WEAR A MASK



COVER COUGHS & SNEEZES WITH A TISSUE OR YOUR ARM. AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE & DO NOT SPIT



AVOID LOITERING IN COMMON AREAS & SETTING DOWN PERSONAL ITEMS



WASH HANDS WITH WARM WATER & SOAP FOR AT LEAST 20 SECONDS



DRY HANDS THOROUGHLY



USE A PAPER TOWEL TO TURN OFF THE SINK & OPEN THE DOOR TO EXIT

Perelman School of Medicine University of Pennsylvania

SOCIAL DISTANCING



6 ft.

doesn't have to mean

EMOTIONAL DISTANCING

take time to **CHECK IN**



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TIPS FOR STAYING POSITIVE & HEALTHY DURING SOCIAL ISOLATION

- Maintain a connection with the people you love, even if it can't be a physical one
- Schedule these interactions
- Continue regular therapy but via telehealth instead of in person
- Use social media, but actively, not passively
- Replace lost physical contact


Dr. Elizabeth Hunt & Dr. Lyle Ungar, Dept. of Psychology School of Arts & Sciences

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Know the SYMPTOMS COVID-19*



COUGH



FEVER



SHORTNESS OF BREATH

MAY APPEAR 2-14 DAYS AFTER EXPOSURE

*This list is not all inclusive. Please visit cdc.gov for more information

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A SIMPLE EXERCISE

To help stay calm in the face of COVID-19 uncertainty from **Dr. Martin Seligman**, director of Penn's Positive Psychology Center.

- Ask yourself, "What is the worst possible situation?"
- Force yourself to think about the best outcome
- Consider what's most likely to happen
- Develop a plan for the most realistic scenario

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Talking to kids about COVID-19

Tips by **Caroline Watts, EdD**, Graduate School of Education

- Manage your own fears & feelings first
- Be direct & reassuring
- Model good behavior, & find ways to fit in fun
- Discuss & plan what quarantine looks like for your family

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STRAIGHTFORWARD STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING ANXIETY

- Prioritize self-care by maintaining a healthy diet, exercise & sleep routine
- Increase awareness of anxiety-driven behaviors. Avoiding triggers of anxiety may help in the short run. But for long-run success, increase awareness and...
- Reduce anxiety-driven behaviors. Then re-engage in routine (& CDC-approved!) activities to further reduce anxiety.
- Build tolerance for uncertainty. Anxiety is a "future-focused emotion" so use this time to hone your mindfulness, which "promotes present-moment awareness." (There's an app for that!)
- Catch your thinking patterns. Anxiety-driven cognitions are not problem-solving; they're just worrying. Don't underestimate your resiliency!

Penn Behavioral Health
1-888-321-4433

by Dr. Lily Brown, Center for the Treatment & Study of Anxiety

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Getting Back & Transitioning Well

As we begin this unprecedented transition, it is vital to keep in mind that the safety of our clients, staff, and community members is our top priority. We are all very eager to return to “normal life” and our ability to regain a sense of normalcy is dependent on each of our individual actions. This transition will undoubtedly come with some obstacles and challenges, and we must all be prepared to adapt to an evolving situation. In order to overcome these challenges, we will need to be **patient** and **flexible**. It will require **self-awareness, diligence, and resilience**. This is an opportunity to demonstrate just how resilient our community can be. This transition will take place in phases, as outlined in the previous section. The successfulness of this phased transition will be dependent on each individual doing their part to eliminate, or at the very least, minimize all risks by adhering to the safety measures outlined throughout this newsletter. We wish you all the best in this time of transition, and we’re excited to start coming together once again!

The following are recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), which we strongly encourage you to review [please refer regularly to the CDC website for the most up-to-date information]. We underscore the importance of adhering to all guidelines of personal hygiene, personal protective equipment, and social distancing in every campus setting as well as in your interactions outside of the campus. As guidance is continually updated, we strongly recommend you refer to the guidelines from CDC.

How to Protect Yourself and Others

Know how it spreads

- ❖ **There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19.**
- ❖ **The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.**
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
 - Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
 - These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
 - Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Everyone who comes to campus must:**Wash your hands often**

- ❖ Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- ❖ If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- ❖ Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact

- ❖ **Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home. If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.**
- ❖ **Put distance between yourself and other people outside of your home.**
 - Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
 - Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
 - Do not gather in groups.
 - Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.
 - Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others

- ❖ **You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.**
- ❖ **Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities.**
 - Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
 - The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
 - Do NOT use a face mask meant for a healthcare worker (e.g. N95 mask).
 - Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others.
- ❖ **The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.**

Cover coughs and sneezes with your arm or tissue

- ❖ If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- ❖ Throw used tissues in the trash.
- ❖ Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Clean and disinfect

- ❖ **Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.** This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
 - If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
 - Then, use a household disinfectant. Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work.

Additional Resources & Links

- ❖ **Staying Busy During COVID-19**

- ❖ <https://www.pennmedicine.org/coronavirus/staying-busy>

- ❖ **Self-Care Coping Tools & Resources**

- ❖ <https://www.med.upenn.edu/PennMedicineTogether/coping-tools/>

- ❖ **PERC Educational Resources**

- ❖ <https://www.med.upenn.edu/bbl/links.html>

- ❖ **Outreach for the Basics and Life Essentials**

- ❖ <https://www.med.upenn.edu/PennMedicineTogether/life-essentials/>

- ❖ **Reaching Out, Connecting, Socializing, and Rejuvenating**

- ❖ <https://www.med.upenn.edu/PennMedicineTogether/colleagues-connecting/>

References

❖ **PSOM Guide for a Safe Return to Campus**

- ❖ Office of the Vice Provost for Research at the University of Pennsylvania
- ❖ Environmental Health and Radiation Safety at the University of Pennsylvania
- ❖ Penn Medicine Communications and Marketing

❖ **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)**

- ❖ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>