

The James



The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center –
Arthur G. James Cancer Hospital and Richard J. Solove Research Institute



OSUCCC COVID-19 Supplemental Information for Wet Lab Research in OSUCCC Space

March 16, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

We are all concerned regarding the health of our community – our patients and study participants, our staff, and basically everyone. The messaging has been clear about hygiene and “social distancing” (better called “physical distancing” since we still want and need to be social, albeit virtually). Until the COVID-19 surge passes, we will do our best to lock down the transmission of the virus. This document includes guidelines and tips for wet-lab researchers.

For those of us in the James/OSUCCC, and have reason to come to the James, we are reminded of our 320+ hospitalized cancer patients, most of whom are immunocompromised (and of course patients throughout the system). Thus, please avoid going to any of the hospital or clinical facilities, unless it is absolutely necessary. Work at home is the best idea, and should be done unless there is a reason the work cannot be done at home.

Here are some bullet points to remember.

- Do not come to work when sick! Notify your healthcare provider if you have symptoms of coronavirus COVID-19 (e.g., cough, shortness of breath and fever greater than 100.4). If in doubt about your symptoms or starting to get sick, please stay at home.
 - If someone calls in sick, or goes home, they call their medical provider. In the meantime, the surfaces in the lab should be cleaned down as indicated below. If someone get a screen positive and gets tested, or someone tests positive, the medical center has protocols to manage that.
- Virtually all previous face-to-face meetings are not essential, no matter how few the number of attendees. Please do this virtually. If there is an important reason that a meeting needs to be face-to-face, then please practice physical/social distancing. It may be less optimal than a face-to-face meeting, but better to not be a vector or be quarantined in your home for 14 days.
- Personal hygiene:
 - Each and every person walking into a lab should wash their hands in the sink with soap for at least 20 seconds, or use alcohol-based hand cleaners. Hand washing is preferred given the shortage of hand sanitizers. Remind your colleagues if they do not do this.
 - Wash your hands frequently.
 - Avoid touching your face.
 - Hand sanitizer stations are about to be installed outside all elevators. Please use them every time you get off the elevator.

- If wearing gloves, remember to wash your hands when removing gloves.
- Paper towel dispensers are being returned to the bathrooms so that you can wash your hands appropriately.
- Surfaces:
 - Disinfect common laboratory areas and frequently touched surfaces with 70% ethanol hourly (e.g. doorknobs, sink handles, freezer doors, fume hood sashes, telephones). Also see: https://busfin.osu.edu/sites/default/files/disinfectants-sanitizers.pdf?utm_campaign=umar_faculty-staff-newsletter_fy20_oncampus%20today%2020200316&utm_medium=email&utm_source=EOACKL
 - Wipe down surfaces for shared equipment before use.
 - Wait until the surface is dry before use.
 - Keyboards can be covered with plastic wrap and changed frequently.
- Staffing:
 - Develop plans for staff shortages. Decide what are essential functions to cross-cover for staff.
 - Join forces for cross-coverage with your neighbors' labs.
 - Note that if your staff become challenged with shortages, this is likely also happening across the CCC including administration.
 - Identify experiments that can be ramped down (cells frozen, etc.).
 - Consider not starting new experiments that are long term. For all experiments, ask yourself how important are they to begin now, and what are the ramifications if staff are not available to complete the experiment.
 - Prepare to limit access to shops or core facilities if warranted by reductions in staff. Assume cores will have slower turn-around times.
 - Delay sending samples to shared resources if not essential to get the experiments done now.
 - Delay sending non-essential orders or other requests to our administrative folks.
 - Consider shifts so that no more than one person works in a bay.
 - Each floor should designate 1-2 persons to accept packages so that the truck driver can get a signature.
 - Plan for delays or loss of vendor support over an extended period of time such as gas or dry ice deliveries, chemical or biological waste removal, etc. Ensure you have adequate supply of cryogenic liquids needed to maintain samples (e.g. cell lines) or cool equipment (e.g. magnets).
 - Maintain a sufficient inventory of critical lab and safety supplies that may be impacted by global shipping delays.
- Vendors should not come to campus unless essential.
- All non-essential travel is now precluded by OSU. (Essential travel can only occur with the highest levels of review.) You should apply this principle to visitors traveling to our facilities as well.

Here is the URL for NIH guidance for research: <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-20-087.html> Note that there are provisions for delays in research and unanticipated costs.

- Note, labs do not officially shut down, and working from home is the same as working in the lab in the context of charges to the grant.

The Office of Research has posted an update to the Interim Guidance for Human Subjects Research. We will notify you with updates to this policy, but it is your responsibility to check for updates, and know the guidance. The guidance can be found at:

<https://orrr.osu.edu/2020/03/12/interim-ohio-state-guidance-and-faqs-on-human-subjects-related-research-visits-during-covid-19-outbreak/>

IRB related questions should be directed to the IRB at ORRRcovid@osu.edu.

For more information on COVID-19 and Ohio State related updates, visit <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/features/coronavirus/staff-and-students> and <https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/features/coronavirus/patient-care>



Raphael E. Pollock, MD, PhD, FACS
Director, The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center
Kathleen Wellenreiter Klotz Chair in Cancer Research



Peter G. Shields, MD
Professor and Deputy Director
The Ohio State University Comprehensive Cancer Center