



Frequently Asked Questions: COVID-19

1. What precautions are being put into place to prevent an outbreak among students?

There are several precautions in place to prevent an outbreak among students. These are:

- a. **Online Learning and Reduction in Class Size for In-Person Learning:** Online learning was extensively developed to complete the academic year and in preparation for select classes this year. In-person learning has been re-developed to allow for small group sessions. We also have had a full facility review, re-purposing large spaces to allow for social distancing.
- b. **Requirement of all persons to wear a face mask when in the buildings of New York Medical College (NYMC) and the Touro School of Dental Medicine (TCDM)** - Students are being provided with safety packs upon return to campus. These packs include a facemask, hand hygiene supply, disinfectant wipes and a thermometer. These will be distributed by respective schools.
- c. **Always try to maintain six feet of social distancing.** Common areas will be set up in ways to promote at least six-foot distancing. In areas where this cannot be done, the requisite personal protective equipment will be used.
- d. **Scrupulous attention to hand hygiene.** All individuals must be cognizant of the need for frequent hand washing. Increased alcohol-based hand hygiene dispensers are being placed throughout campus to promote hand hygiene where handwashing might not be as convenient.
- e. **Scrupulous attention to surface disinfection.** Our cleaning services are providing enhanced disinfection, which includes more frequent disinfection of high touch surfaces, and disinfection stations are placed in common areas. All persons are encouraged to disinfect their workspace, computer keyboard and telephone, and high touch surfaces prior to use. Questions about disinfectants: contact: NYMC_EHS@nymc.edu
- f. **Symptom Screening of all persons entering the buildings:** All persons entering the buildings of NYMC and TCDM must chart their temperature and report any symptoms consistent with COVID-19 infection or any exposure to COVID-19. This will be done by self-attestation with the option to complete the temperature screen and attestation at entry.

2. What personal protective equipment will be available to me?

- a. Reusable cloth masks will be provided to all students for non-clinical use.
- b. N95 Respirators:
 - NYMC School of Medicine: Faculty have worked very closely with our major affiliates to be sure that we can fit test students for the N95 respirators that the hospitals will have available for the students. Fit testing will be occurring for the third year students the week of June 22, and, as needed, for the 4th year students the week of June 29th. Students will be provided with the N95 respirator at the time of successful fit testing.
 - TCDM: All students in clinical rotations are being fit-tested for an N-95 respirator and will be provided with this respirator at the time of successful fit-testing. Any student who has not yet been fit-tested or has questions, please see Ms. Samantha Silver to schedule a fit test appointment.
- c. Facemasks: A surgical facemask is used over the N95 to allow for re-use of the N95 respirator. These will be available at clinical sites.
- d. Eye protection: Will be available at clinical sites and through NYMC / TCDM as needed.
- e. Gowns and Gloves: Will be available at clinical sites and through NYMC / TCDM as needed.
- f. Training in the donning and doffing of personal protective equipment is being arranged for each program.

3. How may I be tested for COVID-19 when I return to campus?

There are several options for testing. At the NYMC and TCDM campus, the Family Health Center (914-828-0435) can test students, employees and visitors for either a diagnostic test for COVID-19, or a COVID-19 antibody test to determine possible prior infection. Other options include the tent at Westchester Medical Center; one can call 914-202-4530 or an appointment can be booked on-line:

<https://www.westchestermedicalcenter.org/news/coronavirus-update-1401>;

and testing sites are available throughout New York, listed at the New York State Department of Health:

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/find-test-site-near-you>

4. Will testing be required before returning to campus?

At this time, COVID-19 diagnostic testing is not a requirement for students returning to campus. COVID-19 diagnostic testing and antibody testing is available for anyone who would like to be tested. Please see #3 above.

5. What will happen when a student or employee is symptomatic or tests positive? How will others be protected?

Symptomatic students /employees who have not been tested:

- a. Must first stay home. Any symptomatic person must seek medical advice by first calling either their physician, or students may call Health Services (914-594-4234) and employees may call the Family Health Center (914-828-0435).

- b. Any student who is symptomatic is also to inform Health Services even if the student has spoken with their physician.
- c. Persons with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 must isolate and begin to identify contacts within the 48 hours before symptom onset, in the event this is a case of COVID-19. Assistance with the identification and notification of contacts will be done under the guidance of Health Services for students, and in collaboration with Departmental directors, Human Resources and Health Services for employees.

Confirmed COVID-19 cases (Those with a positive diagnostic test):

- a. Anyone testing positive for COVID-19 on a diagnostic test:
 - Students: Notify Health Services
 - Employees: Notify your supervisor
- b. All confirmed cases must isolate in accordance with NYS law.
- c. The Westchester Department of Health will be involved with all cases, identifying the contacts of these cases. Contacts are identified beginning 48 hours before the onset of symptoms; for asymptomatic cases of COVID-19, contacts are identified beginning the date of the positive test. Contacts must quarantine for 14 days and are followed for the development of symptoms.
- d. Department supervisors and Health Services will notify Energy, Environmental Health and Safety with the areas the COVID-19 infected person occupied so that enhanced cleaning will be done.
- e. All symptomatic persons will be asked to begin a list of potential contacts at the time of symptom onset, or for asymptomatic persons, at the time of a positive diagnostic test, to begin the notification process and ensure persons are prepared to work with the Department of Health.
- f. Once a case is confirmed with a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, the Westchester County Department of Health will notify contacts.

6. What will be the procedure for quarantine for students who live in student housing? In particular for those students who have apartments in which a bathroom or kitchen is shared.

- a. Quarantine or isolation can be done in an apartment with a shared bathroom or kitchen as has been done by many persons living in apartments since the onset of COVID -19, but requires scrupulous attention to disinfection, with clear procedures for distancing. The person will be provided with the isolation/ quarantine protocol, which specifies in detail how to minimize contamination.
- b. If there are circumstances in which an exposed person may be at high risk of COVID-19 associated complications, the exposed person will be given the option to quarantine in another location outside of the apartment to minimize any risk. Every effort will be made by the Housing Office to assist with such accommodations.
- c. After completion of isolation, Facilities Management will arrange for a decontamination of the apartment and any other indicated areas.

7. Resources for COVID-19 Learning and Updates:

- **NYMC COVID_19 Newsletter** from the Center for Disaster Medicine
- **Westchester County Department of Health:**

<https://health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus>

- **New York State Department of Health Weekly Provider Webinar:**

<https://coronavirus.health.ny.gov/weekly-health-provider-webinar>

- **New England Journal of Medicine: Has a section compiling all articles:**

<https://www.nejm.org/coronavirus>

- **Journal of the American Medical Association: Has a section compiling all articles**

<https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jama/pages/coronavirus-alert>

- **Coursera: COVID-19 Contact Tracing** – This free course, provided by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, is the course done by all contact tracers in New York. It provides an excellent overview of COVID-19 and explains how contact tracing is done.