

COVID-19

UPDATES # 3 -- from RIMG

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Thank you for tuning in!

What will we discuss ...

- Today we will review of some of the information we covered in our previous COVID-19 webinars.
- We will review some new related topics which we did not discuss last time.
- We will talk more about testing (including antibody testing).
- We will talk about when and how we may get back to a new normal at RIMG and with medical care in general.
- Finally, we will take questions!

COVID-19 : The Basics

- What is COVID-19 or Coronavirus?
- Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The disease was first identified in December 2019 in Wuhan, the capital of China's Hubei province, and has since spread globally, resulting in the ongoing 2019–20 coronavirus pandemic.
- What does COVID-19 stand for?
- In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as “2019 novel coronavirus” or “2019-nCoV”. There are many types of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses.
- Is the coronavirus disease the same as SARS?
- No. The virus that causes COVID-19 and the one that caused the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in 2003 are related to each other genetically, but the diseases they cause are quite different.

How is this virus spread?

COVID-19 is a novel disease and we are continuing to learn about how it spreads and the severity of illness it causes. The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading very easily and sustainably between people.

Information from the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic suggest that this virus is spreading more efficiently than influenza, but not as efficiently as measles, which is highly contagious.

COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly through close contact from person-to-person in **respiratory droplets**, or other secretions, such as saliva, from someone who is infected. Some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.

Stop the Spread of Germs

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.



Stay at least 6 feet
(about 2 arms' length)
from other people.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a
tissue, then throw the tissue in the
trash and wash your hands.



When in public, wear a
cloth face covering over
your nose and mouth.



Do not touch your
eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect
frequently touched
objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick,
except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap
and water for at least 20 seconds.



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

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How you can prevent getting the virus and stop the spread of COVID-19?

Wear masks or other facial coverings when you are outside of your home. Wash your hands frequently. Avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes.

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

***Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.



cdc.gov/coronavirus

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INCUBATION PERIOD:

Ranges from 1-14 days,
most commonly around 5 days

SYMPTOMS:

The most common symptoms are fever, cough and shortness of breath. Many patients however have little or no fever and some have no cough. Some patients have diarrhea or nausea. The CDC has added new symptoms to the common symptom list. We will discuss these next.

Please remember that asymptomatic patients may have this virus and can spread it without knowing they are carrying the virus.

COVID-19 Symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure to the virus**. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

CDC has a symptom checker on their website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Who is at high risk?

Anyone can get sick from COVID-19 and it seems that anyone can become very ill. However those who are at higher risk for having severe cases are older patients, and those with compromised immune systems such as diabetes, asthma, chronic pulmonary disease, cancer, and other chronic illness.

What You Can do if You are at Higher Risk of Severe Illness from COVID-19

Are You at Higher Risk for Severe Illness?



Based on what we know now, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- People aged 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility

People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised
 - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications.
- People with severe obesity (body mass index (BMI) of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

Here's What You Can do to Help Protect Yourself



Stay home if possible.



Wash your hands often.



Avoid close contact (6 feet, which is about two arm lengths) with people who are sick.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.



Avoid all cruise travel and non-essential air travel.

Call your healthcare professional if you are sick.

For more information on steps you can take to protect yourself, see CDC's [How to Protect Yourself](#).



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cdc.gov/coronavirus

What can you do to stop the spread?

- **Even as Montgomery county is now in Phase 1 of re-opening, you should still try to minimize the time you spend in crowded public places.** If you are not an essential employee, please continue to stay home as much as possible. It is ok to go out to stores for groceries and medications. It is also ok and important to spend time outdoors in the fresh air, as long as you are feeling well. Remember to wear a mask or another facial covering when you are in a store or other public place. And now it is ok to eat at a restaurant, outside seating only.
- Maintaining good social distance (about 6 feet) is very important in preventing the spread of COVID-19.
- Remember that the virus can be spread from contact with contaminated surfaces or objects
- 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, but we are still learning more about this virus. CDC recommends people practice frequent “hand hygiene,” which is either washing hands with soap or water or using an alcohol-based hand rub. CDC also recommends routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces.

REOPENING

MONTGOMERY

PHASE 1 GUIDELINES

Effective Monday, June 1 | 6 a.m.

RETAIL	RESTAURANTS	CHILDCARE
Curbside Only	Outdoor Dining (Curbside Pickup Still in Effect)	Open for Children of Essential Employees and Phase I Opening Employees
OUTDOOR YOUTH SPORTS	PERSONAL SERVICES	OUTDOOR DAY CAMPS
Limited, Low-Contact Outdoor Practices	Hair Salons and Barbers by Appointment for Select Hair Services Only	9 or Fewer Campers with 1 Counselor
CAR WASHES	MANUFACTURING	
Exterior Cleaning Only	Open for Operations	

Face coverings to be worn in all public spaces where
physical distancing can't be maintained.
(Except when seated at outdoor restaurant tables).



Our Road to Reopening

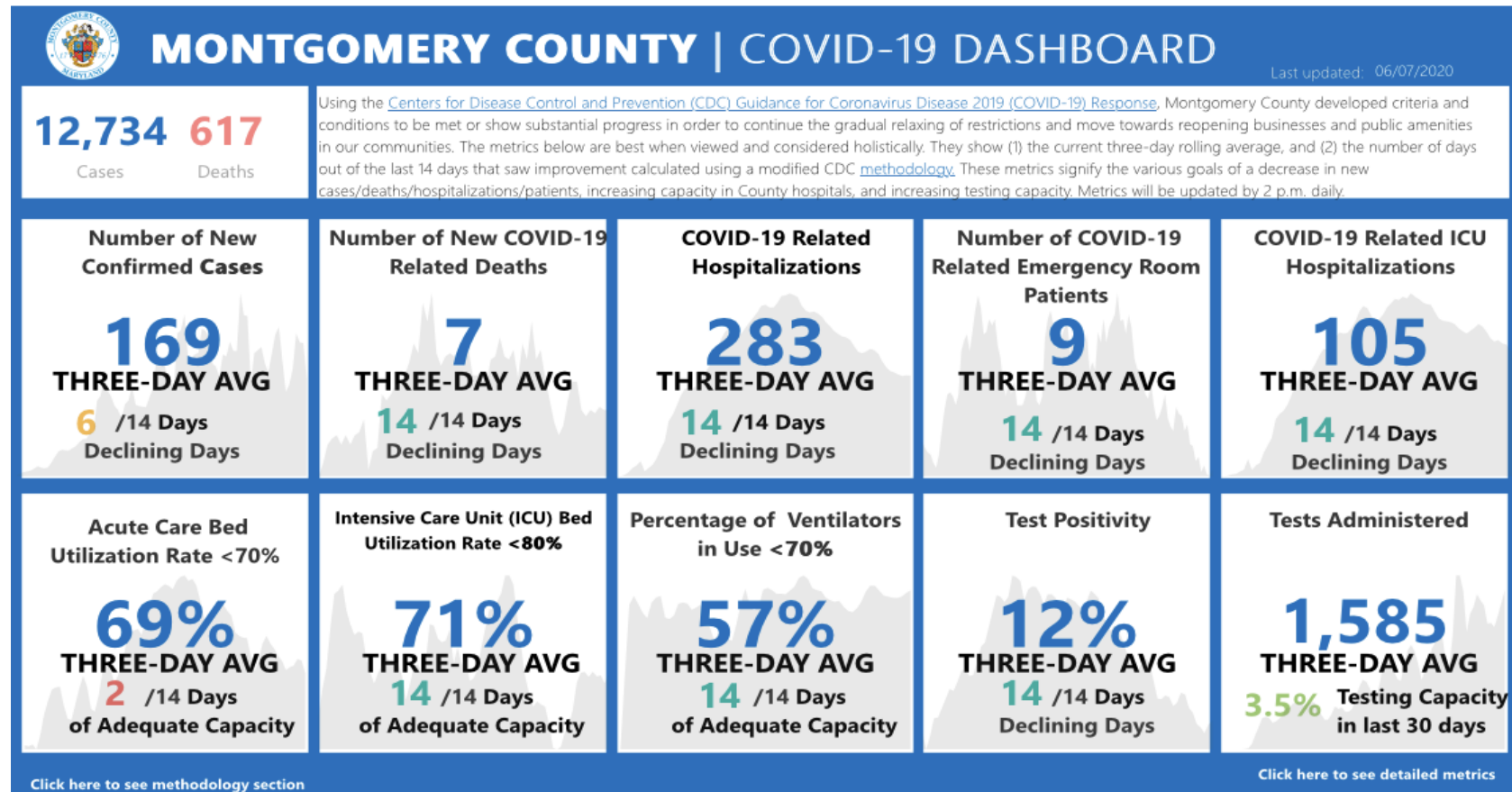
Phase 1- Montgomery County

Modified operations WITH guidelines:

- Retail: Curbside only.
- Restaurants and bars: Outdoor seating (delivery and curbside pick-up continues).
- Childcare: Open for dependents of essential employees and Phase 1 reopening employees.
- Personal services: Hair salons and barber shops for hair only. By appointment.
- Houses of worship: Virtual or drive-in services or outdoor gatherings of 10 or fewer participants.
- Manufacturing: Fully reopen but with precautions.
- Car washes: Exterior service only.
- Outdoor produce pickings: Pick-your-own operations.
- Outdoor day camps: Following Maryland Department of Health guidelines.
- Outdoor youth sports: Following Maryland Department of Health guidelines.
- Outdoor recreation continues to be allowed: Golf courses, archery, shooting ranges, marinas, campgrounds, horseback riding facilities.

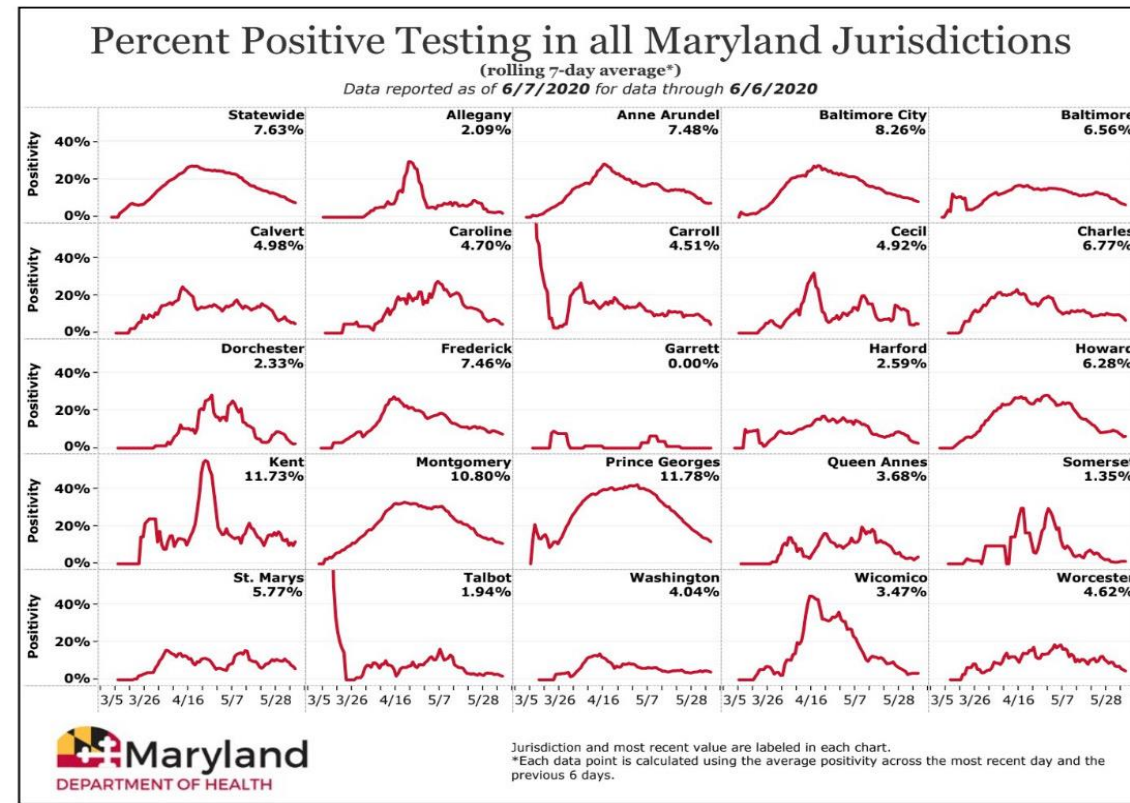
Montgomery County and COVID-19

DATA BELOW AS OF 6/7/2020



Maryland testing by county. This shows Montgomery and PG Counties have the highest percent positive testing in the state.

Presumably, all counties are doing a lot more testing now compared to a month ago. The comparison between the counties in part explains why other parts of Maryland have moved to Phase 2 of re-opening. Montgomery County should be there soon.



What summer activities can I safely enjoy?

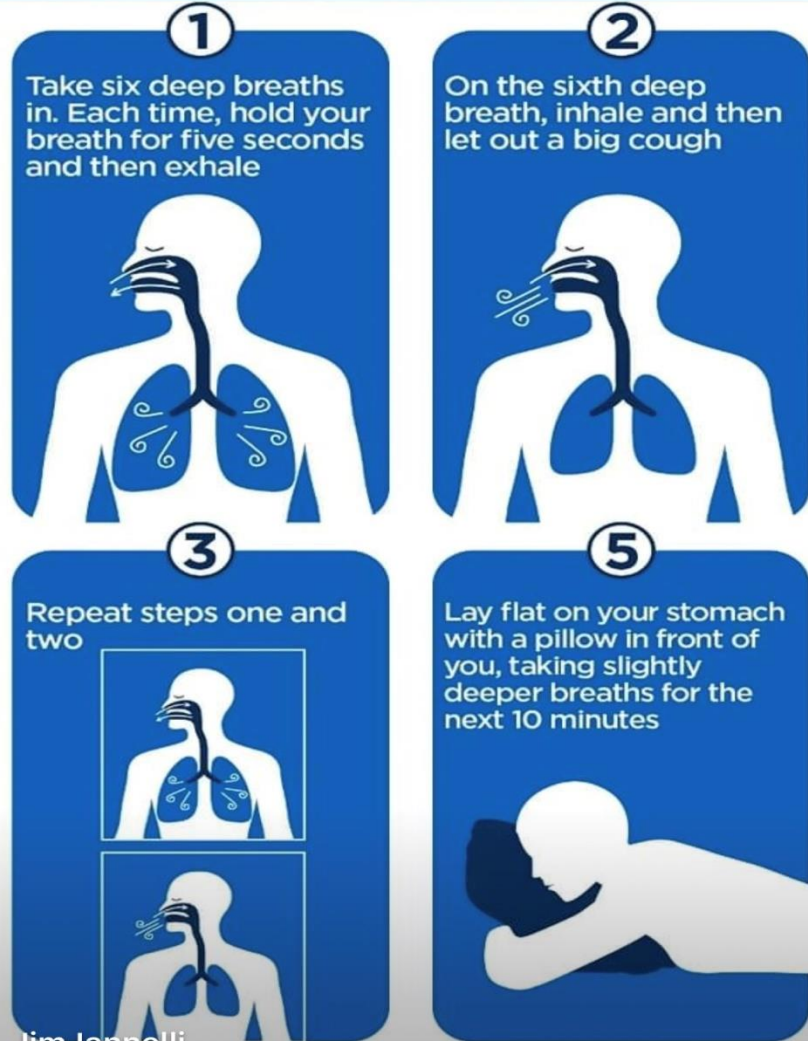
NPR published this [article](#) outlining low to high risks for summer activities

- Spending the day at a popular beach or pool: low risk
- Letting a friend use your bathroom: low risk
- Going to a vacation house with another family: low risk
- Going camping: low risk
- Staying at a hotel: low to medium risk
- A BYOB backyard gathering with one other household: low to medium risk
- Using a public restroom: low to medium risk
- Eating indoors at a restaurant: medium to high risk
- An outdoor celebration such as a wedding with more than 10 guests: medium to high risk
- Getting a haircut: medium to high risk
- Attending a religious service indoors: high risk

What should you do if you are not feeling well?

- **Please call RIMG if you are not feeling well.** If you are concerned that you could have the virus, we will schedule a virtual visit and determine what is needed. Some patients will be referred for testing, if appropriate.
- If you have tested positive as an RIMG patient (elsewhere or with our office), we will be scheduling frequent virtual visits and making frequent check in calls with you to ensure your safety and health.
- Most patients will not need to go to the ER or the hospital. We can help determine if you need that kind of care. If you are acutely ill with severe shortness of breath, chest pain or change in mental status call EMS or call or go to an ER. If your symptoms are moderate, please call us first. One of our providers is always on call, even nights and weekends.

Doctors in Canada and the U.K. are using this breathing technique to help increase oxygen flow to the lungs:



Breathing exercises with COVID-19

- This breathing exercise may be helpful with confirmed or suspected disease.
- It works to expand the lower part of the lungs and dislodge and mucus and then cough it out to prevent pneumonia or other pulmonary complications.
- The deep breathing helps the airways open initially, then the cough loosens the mucus at the end.
- With severe COVID-19 there can be many secretions, so getting out the mucus and moving it is key. The “postural drainage” position at the end lets gravity help pull the secretions outs.
- YouTube video available:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=HwLzAdriec0&feature=emb_logo

Testing for COVID 19 at RIMG

- RIMG is currently offering two forms of COVID-19 testing: *PCR (Nasal Swab) test* and the *Serum Antibody IgG (Blood Test)*. **A virtual visit with one of our providers is required prior to testing.**
- *PCR (Nasal Swab)*: This test will detect if you are actively infected with the COVID-19 virus.
 - If you think you have active COVID-19 illness or if you have had close contact with a COVID 19 patient, please contact us for a virtual visit. Your provider can order the nasal swab PCR test if appropriate.
- *Serum Antibody IgG (Blood Test)*: This test will detect if you have had prior exposure to COVID-19 and have built an antibody for the virus. For most viral illnesses, a positive antibody means prior exposure to a virus and some degree of immunity to future infection. As COVID-19 is a novel (new) infection, it is unclear if a positive antibody definitively offers immunity. Despite a positive antibody test, the recommendation is to still practice universal precautions.
 - If you think you may have had COVID-19 in the past, and have been better for at least two weeks, please make a virtual visit if you want to consider antibody testing.

Testing for COVID 19 at RIMG , cont.

How long will it take to receive my results and how do I view them?

- *PCR (Nasal Swab)*: Generally, it will take 2-3 days to receive your results. Your results can be viewed via your patient portal account and you will receive an email/text notification once they are available.
- *Serum Antibody Blood Test (Total or IgG)*: Generally, it will take 3-5 days to receive your antibody results. Your results can be viewed via your patient portal account and you will receive an email/text notification once they are available.

What platform do we use for testing?

- All Serology (Antibody) and Molecular/PCR tests are sent to our commercial lab partners, LabCorp or Quest Diagnostics.
- For serology, we are referring patients for the [Labcorp Roche](#) COVID-19 antibodies testing. This specific antibody test has approval for FDA Emergency Use and has a 99.8% specificity.

More Information on COVID-19 PCR testing (active infection)...

- This testing is to look for evidence of active disease, active viral material present in your body.
- Even the best testing available will miss some patients; studies suggest up to 15% of patients who test negative may actually have COVID-19. Depending on your situation and your symptoms, you may still have COVID-19, even if testing is negative.
- In this case your provider will advise you to take the same precautions as we would with a positive test.

More Information on COVID-19 Antibody testing...

- In general, a positive antibody test is presumed to mean a person has been infected with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, at some point in the past. It does not mean they are currently infected.
- Antibodies start developing within 1 to 3 weeks after infection.
- People who receive positive results on an antibody test but don't have symptoms of COVID-19 or have not been around someone who may have COVID-19 are not likely to have a current infection. They can continue with normal activities, including work, but still [take steps to protect themselves and others](#).
- People who receive positive results on an antibody test and who are currently or recently sick or have been around someone with COVID-19 should follow CDC recommendations on [caring for themselves and protecting others](#), and [when they can be around other people again](#).

Serology testing (antibody testing), cont.

- There are many different antibody tests which have come onto the market - these were mostly pushed through the FDA much faster than normal and most of the available tests are not great.
- There may be many patients for whom these tests may give a false positive-meaning that the test result says they have antibody when indeed they do not. So we have to be careful when using antibody testing
- Do remember that we are not sure exactly what having antibodies to COVID-19 means. We are not sure how much immunity these antibodies provide, and how long any immunity will last. There are many unknowns currently and we hope that we will have more answers soon.
- *Statement from WHO: "As of 24 April 2020, no study has evaluated whether the presence of antibodies to SARS-CoV-2 confers immunity to subsequent infection by this virus in humans."*
- This short video may be helpful to explain why we can't always trust antibody testing: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtISu7OhkYE>

COVID-19 Meridian Study with RIMG

- If you have been infected with COVID-19 (confirmed via swab) within the past 60 days you may be eligible to participate in a research study with our on-site research group, Meridian.
- The study involves blood donation for research regarding COVID-19, to develop new treatments, diagnostics, and preventative care.
- Meridian is also in the running for Covid-19 vaccine trials. They are looking for adult volunteers who would like to join the clinical trials.
- If you are interested in either of these opportunities, please call: (301) 762-5020 ext. 5004, or 912-623-2240.

Plasma Donations from Recovered COVID-19 Patients

- In coordination with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Red Cross is seeking people who are fully recovered from the new coronavirus to [sign up to donate plasma](#) to help current COVID-19 patients.
- People who have fully recovered from COVID-19 have antibodies in their plasma that can attack the virus. This convalescent plasma is being evaluated as treatment for patients with serious or immediately life-threatening COVID-19 infections, or those judged by a healthcare provider to be at high risk of progression to severe or life-threatening disease.

American Red Cross-<https://www.redcrossblood.org/donate-blood/dlp/plasma-donations-from-recovered-covid-19-patients.html>

Children's National Medical Center- <https://childrensnational.org/departments/pathology-and-laboratory-medicine/blood-donor-center/convalescent-plasma-program>

Where are we now at RIMG?

- We are doing primarily telehealth at RIMG since mid-March. We are seeing some patients in the office, when necessary.
- As most of you know, we can do most visits via telehealth, and you can schedule online!
- We even have a **new virtual walk in clinic to be seen on demand** (info on website)! You can utilize this if are interested in COVID-19 testing, also!
- Some insurances will cover wellness visits (BCBS, Cigna, UHC, and Medicare) via telehealth.
- We are able to see patients with a wide range of concerns via a virtual visit; i.e. diabetes follow up, medication follow up, blood pressure management and other follow up as appropriate.
- If you have a wellness visit scheduled but you have not done recent labs, please don't cancel the appointment. We can still follow up on medications, preventative health issues and arrange for labs when appropriate.

Types of in-office visits as of June 8, 2020

- Laboratory visits- *appointments are necessary*
- Coumadin checks
- Biopsies and other procedures (Dermatologists)
- Joint injections/ultrasound when appropriate (Rheumatologists)
- Cardiac testing such as Echocardiograms and dopplers when needed
- Pre-operative visits for upcoming surgeries
- Infusions as needed
- Injections or vaccinations as needed
- Some other offices visits when appropriate care may not be able to be completed with a virtual visit.

What to expect now if you need to come into the office:

- All staff and providers in direct care with you will be in full PPE.
- Our waiting room chairs have been minimized to maintain social distancing and we are cleaning surfaces frequently.
- If you have a lab appointment, arrive at your appointment time and report directly to the lab desk.
- If you have a scheduled in-office appointment, our staff may contact you beforehand to arrange for drive up PCR testing to check for active COVID-19 infection, about 3 business days before your visit.
- Arrive no more than 5 minutes before your appointment time. If you arrive early, please wait in your car until closer to your appointment time.
- Wear a mask when you come to the office. Please do not bring friends or family members with you, unless absolutely necessary.
- **Most importantly, for everyone's safety, if you are having any COVID-19 symptoms or have been possibly exposed to COVID-19, please DO NOT COME IN.** Call or schedule a virtual visit online, instead. *Our late cancellation policy does not apply for this scenario*

What to expect in the next 1-2 months at RIMG:



In the next 1-2 months, we will gradually add more in-office visits to our schedules. **We will limit the number of providers, staff and patients in the office at all times.** Our staff will be in full PPE gear when you are in direct contact with them.



If you have an upcoming scheduled appointment, you should **expect to receive a phone call about 1 week before your visit** to determine if your visit will be virtual or in-office.



Virtual visits will continue to be offered and may be the preferred method for some cases. For example, reviewing labs, test results or medication follow up, can all be done virtually and in many cases is more convenient for you, as the patient!



We hope our next phase for increasing in-office visits will be early July, but is still TBD. During this phase, our primary care providers may plan to do ½ day of virtual visit and ½ day of in-office visits to continue to limit exposure and the number of patients in the office at any given time. **Again, if you feel you need to be seen in person, simply call us to discuss!**

A microscopic image showing several spherical MERS-CoV virus particles. Each particle has a green, textured surface and is covered with numerous purple, spike-like proteins. The background is black.

QUESTIONS...?
Thank you for joining us!

MERS VIR