



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Physical Distancing (also called Social Distancing)

- *What is physical distancing?*
 - Physical distancing is keeping at least 6 feet between you and the person/people around you. This includes avoiding gathering in groups and staying out of crowded places. This should be done at work and outside of work.
- *Why is physical distancing important?*
 - Physical distancing decreases your chance of catching a COVID-19 infection from a person carrying COVID-19. This is important because some people who have a COVID-19 infection can spread the infection even before they start to feel sick.
- *Do I need to practice physical distancing even if I have no symptoms of infection, or the person near me has no symptoms?*
 - Yes, sometimes people who have just caught COVID-19 do not have any symptoms but they can still pass the infection to other people. This is why it is so important to practice physical distancing all the time.
- *Do I need to practice physical distancing everywhere?*
 - It is important to keep your distance in all possible places outside of your home. This includes waiting for an uncrowded elevator, allowing space between you and others on stairs and escalators, and spreading out when using sinks in the restrooms. This is especially important when you are not wearing a mask, such as when eating meals.
- *I often commute with my coworkers. How can I do this safely?*
 - Commuting alone is the best option. However, if commuting alone is not an option, the recommendation is to wear a mask. When commuting home at the end of your shift, you can wear the mask that you received at work if it is clean, use a homemade mask, or ask your manager for a clean surgical mask. It is also recommended that you wear a mask when commuting back into work, too.

Meal Breaks

- *Is it ok to eat and drink with my colleagues in the breakroom without my mask?*
 - No, it is not safe to eat or drink within 6 feet of anyone, since your mask is off. Please take a different break time than your coworkers, find somewhere to eat alone, or sit at least 6 feet apart from others.
 - It is also important to make sure that any areas where people are spending time without masks get extra cleaning on a regular basis.

Do you have Coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms? Please Stay Home.

- *What are the symptoms of COVID-19?*

- Fever or feeling feverish
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Stuffed or runny nose
- Muscle aches
- Loss of ability to smell
- Shortness of breath
- Diarrhea
- *I've had symptoms of COVID-19, but they are only mild. Can I still go to work?*
 - No, please do not go to work if you have any symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild. Please call the Occupational Health COVID-19 Call Center at 617-724-8100 to discuss COVID testing. If you begin to feel sick during your shift, let your manager know, go home, and call the Occupational Health COVID-19 Call Center.
- *If I'm tested for COVID-19, do I still get paid?*
 - Yes, if you are undergoing testing or have a positive COVID-19 test, you will still be paid even though you are not working, and this will not be taken from your benefit time. Your other benefits will also all remain the same.

Room Cleaning Safety Guidelines

- *I need to clean a room where a patient was on precautions for COVID-19. It has been less than 45 minutes since the patient left the room. Do I need to wear a surgical mask or an N95?*
 - If less than 45 minutes have passed since the patient left the room, then yes, you must wear an N95 in the patient's room. Additional personal protective equipment should include a gown, gloves and eye protection (face-shield or goggles).
 - Ensure you follow Brigham protocols to put on and remove your personal protective equipment safely.

Protecting Yourself and Your Family

- *What can I do to help protect myself and my family?*
 - Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or a hand sanitizer at work and at home.
 - Avoid touching your face as much possible, especially with hands that are not clean.
 - Wear a mask when you leave your house. This is a new recommendation from Governor Baker as of April 10, 2020. If you need a mask for outside of work, let your manager know.
 - If someone who you live with is sick or tests positive for COVID-19, you should not spend time in the same room or sleep in the same room.

- Additional tips for protecting yourself can be found on the CDC's website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html>.
- Please note that as long as you do not have COVID-19 symptoms, you can still work.
- *Someone in my family is sick, and I'm worried they may have COVID-19. Can they get tested?*
 - Yes, they can get tested at the Brigham. The Brigham will test sick household members of anyone who works at a clinical site. Please call the Partners COVID-19 Nurse Call Line- 617-724-7000 to arrange testing.