COVID-19: Actions for Research Teams

The university remains open, which includes all labs and research programs at the College of Health Solutions. However, this is a rapidly changing situation, so it is essential that you read this document and all official reports regarding COVID-19 because it could impact your research.

A. Changes in Study Protocols

For projects involving human subjects, research activities that involve direct contact should follow the same safety precautions that are followed regarding any human contact intended to prevent the spread of air and contact delivered viruses and bacteria. However, given the fast-changing situation, it may be necessary to change your research protocol (e.g. discontinuing human contact). If you make any changes to your process, you must submit your modifications to currently approved IRB protocols. If the Investigators determine that the research activities need to be suspended completely, then please contact research.integrity@asu.edu before doing so. As each study is different, what one researcher does may not work for others.

B. Developing Contingency Plans

All PIs should develop a contingency plan for possible cessation of all direct contact with human subject research “temporarily.” Right now, this is not a mandate, but contingency plans should be in place. Some researchers have already discontinued new recruitment and have begun developing such contingency plans.

We recommend that you follow the guidance provided by ASU Health Services (https://eoss.asu.edu/health/announcements/coronavirus). Each researcher is responsible for the conduct of their research.

For frequently asked questions regarding research please go to https://research.asu.edu/covid-19. This will be updated regularly.

C. Addressing Potential COVID-19 Symptoms - Participants and ASU faculty/staff/students

Communication to Study Participants
I. Faculty, staff, and student workers/volunteers need to assure that the following procedures are communicated to all participants prior to participant arrival or before interacting with participants:

1. In the last 24 hours, have you had a sore throat, dry cough, fever, muscle and body aches, fatigue, or been exposed to anyone with a respiratory illness in the past 21 days? Are you taking any medications (e.g., Tylenol, aspirin) for these symptoms now?
   a. If so, please reschedule this participant until they are symptom free for 24 hours without the aid of medication.

2. In the last 21 days, have you or a family member traveled to an area where COVID-19 has spread (Level 2 & 3 countries as defined by CDC)?
   a. If so, those should self-isolate for 14 days and monitor symptoms before coming to campus and meeting with research personnel. If symptoms appear, please check with your health care provider.

II. Information for faculty, staff, and student workers/volunteers if they are ill:

1. If you have any of the symptoms below, please stay home and call your supervisor:
   a. Sore throat, dry cough, fever, muscle and body aches, fatigue, or been exposed to anyone with a respiratory illness in the past 21 days.
   b. Symptoms must have been resolved for a minimum of 24 hours without the help of medications (e.g., Tylenol).

2. If you or a family member have traveled to an area where COVID-19 has spread (Level 2 & 3 countries as defined by CDC), please call your supervisor. If warranted you may need to self-isolate for 14 days.

D. Reducing Exposure Risk

Reducing the Amount of Contact

We request that you encourage study participants to minimize the number of people coming with them to meetings or study visits (e.g., family members). If they come with extra family, depending on the study protocol, consider asking them to wait outside the labs or offices.

Preparing a Safe Research Environment

Cleaning and disinfecting lab equipment procedures based on CDC guidelines:

1. All reusable equipment that participants touch, e.g., headphones, microphones, keyboards, etc., should be disinfected after each use.
2. Remember that the cleaning crews do not clean counters and work surfaces. It is your responsibility to make sure those surfaces are cleaned and disinfected, especially after each participant.
3. Lab cleaning for biohazards is described below.
4. Accessing cleaning and disinfecting supplies:
   a. Each academic unit administrative assistant will be ordering additional disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizers. Please request those from them, but only take what you need.
   b. Clorox wipes are out and there will not be an additional supply until later in March.
   c. Additional lab specific supplies are managed by the lab coordinators.
PURPOSE:
The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to outline the procedure for routine lab
dehcontamination of equipment, materials and premises.

These are general guidelines. Specific procedures for each lab should be developed to cover specific
circumstances.

POLICY:
It is the responsibility of all CHS lab users to clean the equipment, materials and premises between
study participants or procedures and to leave the lab clean and organized at the end of the day.

Read the label first. Each cleaner and disinfectant has instructions that tell you important facts:

- Precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing personal protective
equipment (PPE) or making sure you have good ventilation during application.
- How to apply the product to a surface.
- Instructions on how to prepare (e.g., dilute) if the product is a concentrate.
- How long you need to leave it wet on the surface to be effective (contact time).
- If the surface needs to be cleaned first and rinsed after using.
- If the product is safe for the surface.
- EPA-registered disinfectant information to determine if they are effective in destroying
  pathogens.

PROCEDURE:

Supplies:
Sink and paper towels
Personal protective equipment:
  - Gloves
  - Eye protection
  - Lab coats or other PPE if recommended on the product label or safety data sheet for the
cleaner/disinfectant you are using.

Disinfectant:

CaviWipes 1 or Cavicide 1 spray
Protex Wipes or spray
Clorox brand Germicidal Bleach Cleanser (do not dilute)
10% Bleach solution (prepared fresh daily)
Other approved disinfectants (see resource link below)
1. Wear gloves and eye protection when handling cleaning supplies/chemicals.
2. Clean all items used after a participant has been in the lab.
3. Clean any visible contamination (e.g., organic material, makeup, lotion) from surfaces and equipment first with soap and water or by soaking with a cleansing disinfectant and wipe away debris.
4. Dispose of biohazard waste in the appropriate EHS approved containers and follow EHS procedures for biohazard spills.
5. Apply one of the disinfectants listed above to contaminated or potentially contaminated areas and let it stand for the indicated contact time following guidelines for each type of disinfectant.
6. Wipe down equipment contact points after use with disinfectant.
7. At the end of the day, disinfect the entire lab. This includes wiping down all equipment, countertops, cleanable furniture, doors handles, faucets, and computers with disinfectant.
8. Wash hands after cleaning and before leaving the lab.
9. Conduct scheduled assessment of cleaning and disinfecting routines to identify areas and items requiring additional attention. Routinely assess decontamination methods and materials.

Resources:

For more information on disinfection and for a list to products with EPA-approved emerging viral pathogens claims that are suitable for porous and non-porous surfaces go to


M. Adelaida Restrepo, Ph.D.
ASHA Fellow | Fulbright Fellow | Honors Faculty
Assistant Dean of Research
Professor in Speech and Hearing Science Program
College of Health Solutions, Arizona State University
Ph. (602)496-2536 or (480)727-8795
For appointments, please contact Cindy Lucas at Cindy.lucas@asu.edu