# Important Information about COVID-19 and Research Participation[[1]](#footnote-1)

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At UC San Diego, our primary responsibility related to research is to protect the safety of our research participants.

The information related to risks of COVID-19 changes every day. The leaders at UC San Diego are monitoring these risks and deciding how these risks should change our research. If you have questions about COVID-19 and your participation in research, please consult the study team.

COVID-19 refers to the Coronavirus that is being spread across people in our communities. We need to provide you with important information about COVID-19, and to review ways in which your study participation might change because of COVID-19 related risk.

If you are considering joining a study at this time or are currently enrolled in a study, it is important that you consider the following information to determine if study participation is right for you at this time.

## Research Volunteer Information

**How could your participation in this research change as a result of COVID-19?** There are several ways we try to minimize your risk. If possible, we limit the number of times you have to come to a clinical care or research site. We ask every research participant if they have the symptoms of COVID-19 or have been in close contact with any cases. We reduce the time you are exposed to other people as much as possible. If you are suspected to be positive for COVID-19, there may be last minute changes to how research procedures are performed [such as a change from an in-person visit to a telephone call] or rescheduling of research tests or procedures to ensure your safety. It is even possible that your study will be put on hold or stopped because of COVID-19.

Other examples of how your participation will be affected:

* Face coverings are mandatory. In the event you have respiratory issues which make it impossible for you to meet this requirement, the research team will work with you to find alternative protective measures.
* Upon arrival, you may be asked to wait in your car until the study team is ready to see you. The study team will call/text when they are ready and you can enter the facility. This will reduce the number of people in the waiting areas.
	+ - For research volunteers with mobility issues or special needs, the waiting areas will be cleaned & disinfected and have seating signs to ensure social distancing.
	+ In general, no more than 2 (non-clinic) people will be allowed in clinic rooms/spaces. This includes research volunteers and their caregiver (if applicable), or a child and adult caregiver.
	+ There will be one-way traffic flow whenever possible entering and exiting the facility.

It is very important to stay connected with the Research Team. Please ask if you have any questions!

## COVID-19 General Information

**How is COVID-19 spread?** COVID-19 is a virus spread mainly by mostly by respiratory droplets. This can happen between people who are in close contact from one another (less than 6 feet). It is also possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, then touching their mouth, nose or eyes.

**Can COVID-19 be prevented?** Current ways to minimize the risk of exposure to COVID-19 include “social distancing” which is a practice to decrease the potential for direct exposure to others who may have been exposed to COVID-19, for example by avoiding large gatherings or refraining from shaking hands with others. We are taking as many precautions as we can to support social distancing and require frequent handwashing to protect you and others. Proper hand washing is very effective at neutralizing the virus.

**What are the risks of COVID-19?** For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. While we are still learning about this virus, the information we have right now suggests that the percentage of infected people who might die from the virus is about 3% among those who acquire it, which is why the country and the world have taken significant steps to try to stop the spread of the virus.

**Who is most at risk?** Individuals over 60 and with chronic conditions such as cancer, diabetes and lung disease have the highest rates of severe disease from the infection. Also remember that all visits and study procedures are voluntary. You can reschedule a visit or decline a research procedure at any time without penalty.

**Are there treatments available?** At this time there is no vaccination or proven treatment for the COVID-19 infection. But research studies, just like the one you are in to help advance science, are underway. The identification of cures for serious diseases and conditions and scientific advancement would not be possible without people like you!

1. Adapted from Johns Hopkins University [↑](#footnote-ref-1)