

July 31, 2020

Dear Memphis Jewish Community:

We, the undersigned doctors and healthcare professionals in the Memphis Jewish community, are increasingly concerned with the rise in COVID-19 cases and related deaths in our community.

CDC and other governmental and scientific guidelines continue to be fluid and vary depending on location and prevalence of infection. While every institution will need to determine its own specific policies, we are joining together at this critical time to remind everyone of guidelines that we all need to follow to help care for ourselves and for each other in order to minimize virus transmission in our community.

- **Entering the Public Space and Protecting Oneself:** When entering public spaces, such as grocery stores, pharmacies, etc., individuals should remain at least 6 feet apart (farther away is safer), minimize direct contact, minimize time indoors, and wear a mask (covering mouth and nose) at all times. We also recommend frequent hand washing and/or alcohol based hand gels.
- **Virtual Events:** Events should be held virtually, with only compelling exceptions. *We feel strongly that this is critical. Reducing direct person-to-person spread of the infection is the cornerstone for controlling this pandemic.*
- **Indoor Gatherings:** *Indoor gatherings carry significant and unique public health risks. We advise against them.*
- **Outdoor Gatherings:** Although outdoor gatherings do carry a lower risk of transmission than do indoor ones, the remaining risks require strict adherence to social distancing guidelines (maintaining a distance of greater than 6 feet between people from the same household), limiting the size to small groups, and wearing masks at all times. Due to the risks of transmission, we urge against large group (>15 people) gatherings outdoors of those not living together. The above applies to outdoor gatherings of all kinds.
- **High-Risk Individuals:** Individuals over 65 years old and/or those with chronic medical conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, obesity, immune system compromise, or lung disease are at higher than normal risk of infection and severe disease. We highly recommend these individuals avoid public gatherings completely including any type of Shabbat service and daily minyan.
- **Travel:** Travel should be minimized. Individuals who have travelled from areas with high rates of infection should consider isolation for a full two weeks, avoiding interpersonal contacts and socially distancing at greater distances from all others to mitigate potential transmission.
- **Neighborhood:** We encourage walking in your neighborhood and seeing your friends “from a distance” especially on Shabbat and other times when we would otherwise be with friends.
- **Known Exposure:** If you or someone in your household know you have been exposed to COVID-19, (i.e. someone in your house was diagnosed with COVID-19), isolate yourself for a minimum of 14 days and seek testing. Since a negative test does not rule out infection you should isolate while awaiting test results and independent of the test result. Testing of asymptomatic individuals is difficult at the moment due to the paucity of available testing.
- **Experiencing Symptoms:** Contact your physician by phone and get tested immediately. Because a negative test does not necessarily rule out COVID-19 infection, you should isolate for a minimum of 10 days from symptom onset and for at least 24 hours after resolution of fever and other symptoms.

Go to the ER if symptoms are severe, but call ahead or follow posted ER instructions for potential COVID-19 positive individuals.

- **Testing Positive with Symptoms:** If your test is positive and you have symptoms, contact your primary care physician. Based on CDC guidelines, we recommend isolation from others for at least 10 days from when symptoms began, until symptoms have resolved, and until no fevers for over 24 hours without medication.
- **Testing Positive with No Symptoms:** Currently, the Tennessee Department of Health and CDC recommend isolation for 10 days after testing positive if *no symptoms develop*.

We are very aware that there is no guarantee that full compliance with any set of recommendations will fully prevent any one person from becoming sick. While 100% compliance cannot guarantee not getting infected or sick, full compliance can markedly reduce the likelihood of individual infections and infection-spread to others in the entire community. Widespread compliance with social distancing, mask wearing, and hand washing are, at this time, the keys to controlling spread of this severe infection.

Ongoing efforts to develop effective treatments such as vaccines, are occurring at a record pace including locally at UTHSC and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. We pray that our world will undergo a speedy recovery and develop the tools to combat the COVID-19 virus.

Stay safe and healthy!

Sincerely,

Evan S. Glazer, MD, PhD, FACS | Scott E. Strome, MD | Joshua Wolf, MD, PhD, FPIDS, FIDSA, FRACP

Allen Ardestani, MD, PhD
Sandra Arnold, MD
Scott Baum, MD
Ben Beatus, MD
Mitchell Beatus, MD
Aaron Bloch, MD
Mark P. Clemons, MD
Jay Cohen, MD, FACE
Marc A. Cohen, DDS
Harris L. Cohen, MD, FACR
Sandra Cohen, MD
Deena Levine Davidovics, MD
Menachem Davis, MD
Robert Eiseman, MD
Richard E Fine, MD
Harry Friedman, MD
Norman Galen, MD
Wesley King Galen, MD
Jason F. Goldberg, MD, MS
Stevan Himmelstein, MD
Deborah Horwitz, MS, PA-C
Rebekah Kaplowitz, MD, MPH
Douglas Karmel, MD

Seth Karol, MD
Cindy G. Katz, DNP
Paul J. Katz, MD, FACP
Erica C. Kaye, MD, MPH
Brian Kiel, DPM
Joel I Kronenberg, MD
Marten H Lazar, DPM
Rande Lazar, MD
Stuart Lazarov, MD
Emily Lennon, PA-C
Yehoshua Levine, MD
James Linder, MD
Peter Lindy, MD
David M. Mirvis, MD
Joshua Morris, MD, MA
Sergio Musicante, MD
Alan M. Nadel, MD, FACP,
FAAN
Greg Phelps, MD
Noah Sabin, MD
Alan Schaeffer, MD
Lee Schwartzberg, MD
Burt Sharp, MD

Mark Shermer, MD
Stephen M. Shiffman, MD
Joel Siegel, MD
Avron A Slutsky, MD, FACP
Sol Solomon, MD
Brad Somer, MD
Lee S. Stein, MD
Marc H. Stegman, MD, FACP
Alan Tanenbaum, MD
Sherwin A. Yaffe, MD
Ari VanderWalde, MD, MPH, MBioeth
Noam VanderWalde, MD, MS
Joseph A. Weinberg, MD
Joseph S. Weinstein, MD
Kenneth S. Weiss, MD
Steven Wener, MD
Hillel Wiener, DO
Lana Yanishevski, MD