Occupational Health, Safety and Biosafety

Return to Work on site – COVID 19 Restrictions
Learning Objectives

- To become familiar with the health and safety practices that must be followed in laboratories, offices and other common areas when research activities resume
  - Personal Protective Equipment use
  - Physical / social distancing
  - Hand Hygiene Practices
  - Decontamination practices
- To know what to do if you develop symptoms of COVID-19 or come into contact with a positive case of COVID-19
- To know what the screening practices are for all staff at the Institute
Personal Protective Equipment

**Masks:**
If physical distancing measures are difficult to maintain, wearing a disposable mask is required, as they may offer some additional protection to those around you.

**Gloves:**
- Gloves are to be worn as part of the usual safety measures followed in the laboratory or clinical research setting when handling hazardous materials or biological specimen
- Do not clean or reuse disposable gloves
- Wash hands after removing gloves
- Remove gloves before entering non-lab areas / do not handle common items (phone, doorknobs, ice machine, elevator buttons etc) with gloves

**Lab coats:**
- Remove lab coats before exiting the laboratory and entering any common area such as the lunch room or washroom
- Don a lab coat prior to patient contact, and remove before entering office or common areas
- Lab coats must be changed weekly / dirty lab coats placed in the laundry hamper to be sent for cleaning

**Eye Protection:**
- Universal eye protection is required to be worn by all staff and physicians in all patient facing clinical areas both in-patient and out-patient – face shields, goggles or pre-approved safety glasses worn in combination with masks
- Supplied in patient care areas. Staff may purchase their own but they must be pre-approved
- Protective eye wear does not need to be removed or replaced when moving between patient-facing clinical areas for patient care unless it is soiled or damaged.
Physical / Social Distancing

• Physical distancing involves taking steps to limit the number of people you come into close contact with. This will help to limit the spread of COVID-19 in the community. Ottawa Public Health recommends maintaining a distance of no less than 2 meters or 6 feet between people.
• At all times maintain 2 meter physical distancing in the lab, offices, and common areas.
• If it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of 2 meters a mask must be worn.

Link to the Ottawa Public Health information:
Hygiene Practices

• Wash hands often with soap and water, or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer. At a minimum:
  • Immediately upon entering or exiting the Institute
  • When entering and exiting the lab
  • Before donning or doffing a mask
  • After removal of gloves
  • Before handling food
  

• Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth unless hands have just been washed;
• Cover cough and sneeze with a tissue or cough into the arm/sleeve, not the hand; if a tissue was used discard immediately and wash hands afterwards
• Regularly clean and disinfect high-touch areas at the work station and in shared spaces such as offices or clinic rooms - at the beginning of the shift, throughout and at the end
• For any shared equipment clean between users and / or patients
Decontamination Practices

• Computers and work stations are to be wiped with disinfectant spray, wipes or EtOH at the start and end of work each day
• Common equipment are to be wiped with a disinfectant spray or 70% Ethanol before and after each person uses the equipment
• In the lunch room or break rooms all surfaces (such as the microwave and fridge handle) are to be wiped with disinfectant cleaner before exiting the room
Fire Safety / Code Red

• Propping open laboratory doors is not recommended

Until regular operations resume the following practices will be in place for the laboratories:

• If a fire occurs in the lab:
  • Close doors
  • Turn on all lights
  • IF SAFE, turn off all electrical equipment and ignition sources, secure hazardous materials
  • Exit the lab
    • Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station
    • Call the emergency number – 15555
    • ONLY fight fire with portable fire extinguisher if safe to do so
  • Provide direction and assistance to the Fire Brigade
  • Notify the Fire Marshal if anyone is unaccounted for

• If the fire is at another location:
  • Close doors and go into the corridor to listen for announcements
  • Wait for the “ALL CLEAR” to be announced overhead before re-entering the lab
Common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- Fever
- New or worsening cough
- Difficulty breathing/shortness of breath
- Unexplained fatigue/malaise
- Chills
- Sore throat
- Runny nose/sneezing or nasal congestion
- Hoarse voice
- Digestive symptoms (including nausea, vomiting, diarrhea)
- Flare up of chronic conditions
- Loss of taste/smell

Staff must not enter the Institute if they experience any of these symptoms.
Occupational Health

• Staff must not enter the hospital if they have been in close contact with anyone who has been confirmed to have COVID-19 within the past 14 days, or anyone who has been tested and is awaiting results of COVID-19 testing.

• Staff who are not fully vaccinated (have not received a complete COVID-19 vaccine series or the second dose was fewer than 14 days prior to your return to Canada) is required to quarantine for 14 days after travel outside of Canada and therefore must not enter the hospital.

• If you develop symptoms while at work don a mask immediately and leave the workplace. Take the self assessment on the Ministry of Health’s website: https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment/

  • A COVID-19 test can be obtained at any of the testing sites in Ottawa such as 151 Brewer Way. Starting in October staff and their household contacts can be tested on site at the Heart Institute.

  • OHIRC staff must advise Health and Safety or Human Resources / TOH paid staff must contact Occupational Health at TOH.

  • If your test is positive you will be instructed to self isolate at home and Ottawa Public Health will start the process of tracing all your contacts.
COVID 19 Testing On Site

- Employees or their household contacts, including children two years old and older, can have a COVID 19 test on site as follows:
  - Tests are by appointment only – call 613-696-7000 ext.12683
  - The hours of operation are 6.15 am to 4.00 pm
  - Individuals to be tested must present at H-M250 on Ruskin Street
  - On arrival send a text to 1TEST or to 613-325-9041
  - Individuals will be met and escorted to the testing site and escorted out again when the test is completed
  - Test results are available through MyChart. To register:
    - Call 613-798-5555 ext.77219 or email mychart@toh.ca to get a Personal Identification Number (PIN)
    - Ottawa Public Health (for OHIRC staff) and Occupational Health Services will follow up with all individuals who test positive for COVID-19
Screening

All staff must be screened using the online Wellness Pass or in-person upon their arrival for a scheduled shift before they may enter the hospital or the Intern’s Residence.

- If using the Wellness Pass, staff must complete the screening before entering and must show their own “pass” screen (with their name and the date) to the screening staff members at the entrance.
  - To use the pass, follow the steps below prior to your shift:
    - Text WP to 888-286-0549
    - Complete the questionnaire
    - Receive your wellness pass
- If the “pass” screen is not available at the time of entry for any reason, staff will submit themselves to in-person screening even if they already used the online Wellness Pass.
- Staff entrance to the building is via the old ambulance entrance off Melrose Avenue. Patients and visitors will not be using this entrance.
Follow this link to take the quiz. The password is healthandsafety