



Minimizing Risk – COVID-19	
SOP Number:	200.09
Date:	15-January-2021

## Minimizing Risk – COVID-19

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 COVID-19 is a virus that can cause upper respiratory infection and is spread through airborne and surface droplets produced by coughing or sneezing. Measures aimed at reducing the spread of the virus include: wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (ie. mask, face shield), coughing/sneezing into your sleeve or elbow, frequent hand washing, social distancing and remaining home if you are feeling sick or unwell.

### 2. Research Activities at the CFMM

- 2.1 The CFMM continues to work at both the faculty and institutional level to ensure that research operations are carried out safely and efficiently during COVID-19 restrictions. For more details regarding guidelines please refer to the [Western COVID-19 Research Recovery Plan](#).
- 2.2 As Western transitions through the various phases, and research activities recover, the CFMM *will* continue to provide MRI services for Projects authorized to do so as per the most recent procedures outlined in the [Western Research COVID-19 Updates](#). Continue to monitor the [CFMM News](#) at <https://cfmm.uwo.ca> for any further updates.
- 2.3 The CFMM will continue to exercise policies with regard to research activity, in line with the University operating guidelines to ensure safety with regards to COVID-19. These include measures such as donning appropriate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), limiting the number of individuals permitted into the facility and ensuring appropriate disinfection of all high traffic surfaces prior to and following each research study, as described below.

### 3. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- 3.1 The Core MRI personnel must adhere to PPE guidelines in accordance with the currently mandated standards, as defined by the University, for dealing with human participants and animal models.
- 3.2 Further information regarding the current mandates and FAQs related to research operations at Western can be found at:

[https://www.uwo.ca/research/covid19\\_updates.html](https://www.uwo.ca/research/covid19_updates.html)

### 4. Scheduling, Screening and Limiting Exposure

- 4.1 The university requires adjudication by an appropriate operating unit, department or school to resume animal and human research activities. Studies which may be given priority or be deemed essential include:
  - 4.1.1 New research projects to investigate COVID-19 that require rapid ramp up.



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- 4.1.2 Projects with deadlines for publication, deadlines for student graduation, or extensive longitudinal studies where significant cost would be incurred.
- 4.1.3 Grants or contracts that have specific time-sensitive milestones that need to be completed.
- 4.2 When coordinating MRI time, please indicate if you require a testing/interview room and who will be present during this time.
- 4.3 For human studies, mandatory pre-screening of research participants for COVID-19 related symptoms is required prior to scheduling.
- 4.4 A health screening questionnaire must be completed, on the day of the MRI, for participants, research personnel / coordinators prior to entering the Robarts. One of the following must be used:
  - 4.4.1 For Western personnel: <https://myhr.uwo.ca/>
  - 4.4.2 For individuals external to Western: <https://covid19checkup.ca>. A pdf of this survey result is available to print and forward to the CFMM staff and/or bring along to the MRI appointment.
- 4.5 As research activities resume at the University, and within the CFMM, there will be restrictions pertaining to the scheduling of MRI time. Initially, while guidelines regarding research operations are being tested, the CFMM will enforce the following:
  - 4.5.1 requests for scan time can only be made once approval to resume research activities involving MRI data collection at the CFMM by your operating unit has been approved,
  - 4.5.2 scan time will be limited between 8:00 – 17:00;
  - 4.5.3 after-hours or weekend scanning will be considered by the facility and may require some advanced notice for booking; and
  - 4.5.4 the amount of available scan time, during this transition, will be limited and at the full discretion of the CFMM. All requests will be communicated through: [cfmm-bookings@uwo.ca](mailto:cfmm-bookings@uwo.ca).
- 4.6 Masks must be worn while in the Robarts building at all times and social distancing measures will be followed as per the university mandated standards.
- 4.7 Research participants and research personnel require screening for COVID-19 related symptoms upon arrival for an MRI scan. Laser thermometry may be utilized to assess fever risk. Any participant or researcher that has been exposed to COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) or have symptoms as determined through screening and/or self-assessment questionnaires will not be permitted to enter the Robarts building.
- 4.8 The maximum number of individuals allowed within MRI Zone III during an MRI exam will be limited to: 1 research personnel, 1 study participant (for human studies) and 1 MRI Technologist/Operator.
- 4.9 One additional person may accompany the subject for the study (caregiver, family member for human studies) but must wait in the reception area of the CFMM (Zone II) to allow for appropriate social distancing.



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- 4.10 In special situations where a child or a participant is unable to provide informed consent or requires assistance, a family member or caregiver may be able to accompany the subject into Zone III, at the discretion of the CFMM Director or MRI Technologist.
- 4.11 No food is allowed in the control room at the scanners. Only water, in a sealed bottle, will be permitted within the MRI control room (Zone III).

## 5 Instructions to Study Coordinators / Research Staff for Arrival

- 5.1 Please ensure that you and your subject have done a COVID-19 safety assessment prior to arriving, on the day of the scan. For subjects external to the university community use the <https://covid19checkup.ca> online tool. If the tool indicates a potential exposure or symptoms, please follow instructions from survey regarding follow-up and please contact [cfmm-bookings@uwo.ca](mailto:cfmm-bookings@uwo.ca) indicating you will not be attending the MRI session.
- 5.2 There are two options for arrival and entry into the Robarts building:
  - 5.2.1 Option 1: arrive at the Main Entrance to Robarts, from the Dental Circle off of Perth Drive. Upon arrival, press the intercom button on the left side of door and the security guard will let you in. Security will call the MRI scanner when you and/or your subject arrive. CFMM personnel will come up and get you and/or your subject and escort to the CFMM.
  - 5.2.2 Option 2: arrive via the entrance on the University Hospital (UH) side of the building. Follow the sidewalk to the Robarts building (Cuddy Wing) from the UH front entrance drop off area. Enter the building and use the phone on the left side of the wall to call CFMM reception (the number is posted). CFMM personnel will come up and get you and/or your subject and escort to the CFMM.
- 5.3 It is mandatory that both you and your subject (along with any accompanying family member/care giver) arrive wearing masks and continue to do so while walking through the building. Masks will be provided if you don't have one. If any accompaniment is required, it is encouraged to keep as minimal as possible (ie. one accompanying partner per research subject). This additional person will be required to remain masked, within the MRI waiting area, should they need to stay for the duration of the scan.
- 5.4 The research subject does not need to wear a mask once in the MRI unless they are comfortable doing so. A cloth face mask without ferrous material is required within the MRI.
- 5.5 The CFMM is trying to limit the number of people in the MRI area - so, if you don't need to be present for the scan then you can leave and come back when finished. The MRI Tech will contact you upon completion of the scan.

## 6 Decontamination

- 6.1 Scheduling of MRI scans will now include a 15 minute buffer prior to and immediately following each scan. This allows adequate time for disinfection of all equipment and surfaces prior to the start of any subsequent research scans – and to replace linens in the case of human studies.



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- 6.2 The CFMM uses disinfectant cleaners, proven to be effective against the COVID-19 virus, as set out by Health Canada. The 15 minute buffer time will also allow research personnel from one group to leave, prior to the next group's arrival, reducing the number of individuals in the facility at a given time.



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Revision Chronology		
Version Number	Date	Changes
200.01	23 April 2020	First Version draft SC/MB
200.02	04 May 2020	Further changes TS and JG
200.03	20 May 2020	Addition of section 4.2
200.04	01 June 2020	New section 4.1 – 4.4 (JG)
200.05	04 June 2020	Update Sect 2 and Insert Sect 5
200.07	31 July 2020	Revised and updated according to Phase, removed limit of booking up to 2 weeks in advance
200.08	17 November 2020	Update info regarding COVID and Robarts entry options.
200.09	15 January 2021	Further updates to reflect new institutional procedures following Gov't of Ontario lockout and "Stay at Home" order

CFMM Director Signature:

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Date:

15 – January - 2021

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