

COVID-19 Update

October 22: Exposure Management, NU SCAN Study, Epic Storyboard, and Next Week's Clinical Insights Panel

*Today's issue includes a reminder about masking and physical distancing, and features information about the Northwestern University Screening for Coronavirus Antibodies in Neighborhoods (SCAN) study from **Elizabeth M. McNally, MD, PhD**, Elizabeth Ward Professor and Director, Center for Genetic Medicine, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine. It also includes information about changes to Epic Storyboard and details about the upcoming Clinical Insights Panel.*

EXPOSURE MANAGEMENT

Northwestern Medicine and surrounding communities are experiencing a resurgence of COVID-19 cases and subsequent potential exposures, both in the community and in the workplace. This situation and the knowledge of how to best to manage the surge are evolving. Current safety protocols remain critically important: strict adherence to masking guidelines while at work and in the community, physical distancing, and the use of appropriate PPE, including eye protection, when caring for all patients. Recent workplace exposures have highlighted that breaks in mask usage, particularly while eating, have led to exposures, extensive contact tracing and transmission of COVID-19 to colleagues.

If you or someone in your vicinity is not able to wear a mask, it is important to maintain a 6-foot distance from each other. Asymptomatic carriage of SARS-CoV-2 is common, and evidence suggests that individuals can transmit the virus up to 48 hours prior to the onset of symptoms. Masks and physical distancing are the primary defenses against transmission of COVID-19.

Any potential exposure to a patient, staff member or colleague who has tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 must be reported immediately to Infection Prevention. This will ensure rapid contact tracing and the assessment of possible exposures. Exposed individuals who are identified in this process must complete an Employee Incident Report (EIR) and call the **COVID-19 Hotline at 312.47.COVID** to discuss the exposure, work status and post-exposure testing.

All healthcare workers who have any symptoms of COVID-19 — cough, shortness of breath, muscle pains/aches, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, sore throat, chills, loss of taste or smell, headache or fatigue — should **not** report to work, and instead call the COVID-19 Hotline for evaluation. If any symptoms develop while working, remain masked, leave your work area and contact the COVID-19 Hotline.

SCREENING FOR CORONAVIRUS ANTIBODIES IN NEIGHBORHOODS

Screening for Coronavirus Antibodies in Neighborhoods (SCAN) is a study being conducted by a multidisciplinary team at Northwestern University. In this study, scientists are testing for antibodies to SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. It is estimated that there are more than 10 times the number of COVID-19 cases than have been detected using tests for the virus. COVID-19 has a high rate of asymptomatic and mildly symptomatic cases, especially among younger individuals. One way to detect the reach of COVID-19 is through antibody testing.

The SCAN team developed a highly sensitive and specific test for antibodies to the receptor binding domain of the SARS-CoV-2 virus. This test can be performed on a single drop of blood taken from a finger stick. Participants sign up for the study through the [SCAN website](#), and once accepted, they answer a series of questions about their health status and risks for contracting COVID-19.

Participants also receive a kit through the U.S. mail to collect blood spots at home. The blood spot cards are then returned to the Northwestern Center for Genetic Medicine through the mail, and the quantitative test for antibodies is performed in the research laboratory. The ease of at-home sample collection combined with the precision of laboratory testing is ideal during a pandemic since it does not require participants to leave their homes.

The first phase of SCAN Chicago recruited from 10 ZIP codes in Chicago and is comparing rates of antibodies in these ZIP codes with different rates of COVID-19. Another segment of the study, SCAN FSM, is testing for antibodies among students, faculty and staff on-site at Feinberg School of Medicine. The SCAN study has sent more than 6,000 kits to date. In evaluating the first 2,000 responses, nearly 20% of participants have antibodies to the COVID-19 virus.

The study is ongoing, and scientists hope to learn what features make it more likely that a person has antibodies to the virus that causes COVID-19. As part of the study, we will be re-contacting participants to learn how long antibodies last and whether antibody status changes with time. We are also asking household members to participate so that the team can learn more about household spread of COVID-19.

Study investigators include [Thomas McDade, PhD](#) (Anthropology, Medical Social Sciences); [Elizabeth McNally, MD, PhD](#) (Medicine, Center for Genetic Medicine); [Brian Mustanski, PhD](#) (Medical Social Sciences, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences); [Richard D'Aquila, MD](#) (Medicine, NUCATS); and [Alexis Demonbreun, PhD](#) (Pharmacology). To learn more, please visit the [SCAN website](#) or contact [Dr. McNally](#) via email or by phone at 312.503.5600.

EPIC STORYBOARD TO SHOW MORE COVID-19 DETAILS BEGINNING TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27

When you hover over the COVID-19 banner in Epic Storyboard, you will be able to see more detailed information about a patient's history of COVID-19 infection, COVID-19 orders and results, and disease and travel screening. The following new COVID-19 flags have been created for scenarios that previously did not show any information:

- **Resolved flag** will appear if a patient has had a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the last 90 days that has since been resolved.
- **Has Lab flag** will appear if a patient has had one or more lab tests for COVID-19 within the last 30 days.
- **History flag** will appear if a patient has been tested for COVID-19, but not within the last 30 days.
- **Unknown flag** will appear if there is no known history of a COVID-19 test.

The following existing COVID-19 flags in Storyboard have been updated:

- **COVID-19 Positive flag** will appear if a patient has an active COVID-19 infection that has been documented in the chart. It replaces the COVID-19 infection status.
- **COVID-19 Suspected flag** will appear if a patient has a COVID-19 lab test in process, or is presumed positive for COVID-19 despite a negative test result. The Suspected flag replaces Rule-Out COVID-19 and COVID-19 Presumed Positive flags.

For more information, view the [tip sheet](#).

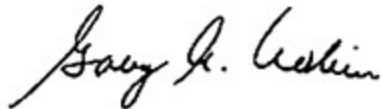
REMINDER: CLINICAL INSIGHTS PANEL NEXT WEEK

Available to all physicians across Northwestern Medicine, the next Clinical Insights Panel is scheduled from **7 to 8 am on Thursday, October 29**. You are encouraged to submit questions prior to the session by emailing covid-19md@nm.org. This session is approved for CME credit.

The discussion will include updates on flu and COVID-19 vaccine development, and feature Infectious Disease Specialist Michael Ison, MD, professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases and Professor of Surgery in the Division of Transplant Surgery.

To participate, [join the Microsoft Teams Live Event](#) when it's time. To claim CME credit in Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine Cloud CME, text the activity code provided during the session to 312.957.8301.

Thank you to all NM physicians and clinicians for your ongoing commitment, collaboration and leadership in providing exceptional *Patients First* care.



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