



**RUTGERS**

Robert Wood Johnson  
Medical School

Dear Parents:

As the number of positive cases of COVID-19 rises and the situation continues to evolve, we understand and empathize with the concerns you have for your child's health and well-being. Please know that we are taking every precaution to ensure our students have a safe and productive learning environment.

As medical professionals, they will understandably be exposed to different medical conditions and infectious diseases throughout the course of their careers. It is our goal to provide our students with a strong educational and clinical foundation to be successful in medicine, while at the same time taking necessary precautions to avoid potentially dangerous or threatening conditions.

To that end, we have been carefully monitoring developments regarding COVID-19 and proactively setting in place contingency plans to be responsive to the needs of our students, faculty and staff, while at the same time prioritizing the health and welfare of our patients and taking extra measures to protect them. Currently, no cases of COVID-19 have been reported at Rutgers University; instead, much of the public health response to this point has been focused on controlling the spread of disease when it occurs.

Given that information, at this time, clinical rotations for students will continue as scheduled, with a few exceptions:

- 1.) Effective immediately, no medical student is permitted to enter the isolation rooms of patients with potential COVID-19 or other respiratory conditions, such as tuberculosis or measles, or other conditions where use of an N-95 mask is required. Additionally, we are altering the experience for the required emergency medicine fourth-year clerkship. Students will not be involved in direct care with Emergency Department patients. The ED is the first point of contact with the healthcare system, prior to any screening or isolation procedures.
- 2.) Students who are feeling sick or exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) will be expected to stay home and not attend clinical rotations and/or classes. If students are experiencing such symptoms, they should call Student Health Services (973-972-8219 in Newark or 732-235-5160 in New Brunswick/Piscataway) or their health care provider to seek guidance on receiving medical care. In addition, they should follow current procedures for reporting illness/absence by contacting the Office of Student Affairs and their course or clerkship director.

We would like to address some questions we have received regarding continuation of clinical rotations and clarify why they (and care of patients in general) are continuing at this time, while large group meetings and events have been canceled. Please understand that the mitigation

activities (limitation of group sizes) are intended to prevent multiple individuals from being infected at one time. When large groups become infected in close timing, healthcare systems may be strained, and there is a greater risk to patients and communities. We know that you appreciate our efforts to follow public health guidelines to protect them.

In addition, given potential issues with ensuring adequate supply of personal protective equipment, we are asking that students not use N-95 masks and thus avoid patients where those masks are required.

The situation regarding COVID-19 is dynamic and rapidly changing. We will continue to work closely with Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences and the university as a whole to determine whether any additional changes need to be made. In the meantime, if you have any additional questions about the above measures, please contact Dr. Carol A. Terregino at 732-235-4577 or [terregca@rwjms.rutgers.edu](mailto:terregca@rwjms.rutgers.edu), or Dr. Maria Soto-Greene at 973-972-3495 or [sotogrml@njms.rutgers.edu](mailto:sotogrml@njms.rutgers.edu).

In addition, Rutgers University has launched a new website from its COVID-19 task force to provide information about important developments, guidance and actions you and your family can take related to COVID-19. This valuable resource, which will be updated regularly, can be found online [here](https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu): coronavirus.rutgers.edu.

Regards,

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