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UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH'S MRC LB3P UPDATE ON COVID-RELATED BARRIERS

March 1-2, 2021



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Key Timeline Covid-Related Research Pauses & Restarts

- **March 23, 2020:** All University of Pittsburgh research activity was halted
- **June 3, 2020:** On-campus research restart
- **July 6, 2020:** Physical Therapy-Clinical & Translational Research Center (PT-CTRC) resumed operations
- **October 27, 2020:** Official start date of recruitment for LB3P study
- **November 20, 2020:** All University of Pittsburgh in-person (Tier 3 studies) research activity was halted
- **February 1, 2021:** In-person research activity permitted to resume
- **February 4, 2021:** Recruitment resumed; baseline visits scheduled at the PT-CTRC

Recently, our university has implemented several measures, including:



- ✓ Installing additional hand sanitizer dispensers
- ✓ More frequent cleaning of often-touched surfaces and common areas
- ✓ Managing arrival & departure times to thoroughly disinfect common areas and promote social distancing
- ✓ Placing signage throughout buildings to remind everyone of proper preventive measures
- ✓ Deep cleaning and disinfecting facilities
- ✓ Limiting the number of people in spaces to maintain social distancing of six feet

University of Pittsburgh Operational Risk Postures:

Guarded Risk

Faculty & Staff

- Work from home encouraged whenever possible
- Those who need to support permitted activities allowed on campus
- Research staff on campus based on Principal Investigator determination
(Most activities are in person with virtual options and limited restrictions)

Elevated Risk

Faculty & Staff

- Work from home encouraged wherever possible
- Those who need to support permitted activities allowed on campus
- Virtual work encouraged for research personnel; some permitted on campus
(Some activities are in person, but most are virtual)

High Risk

Faculty & Staff

- Work from home encouraged wherever possible
- Those who need to support permitted activities allowed on campus
- Research as permitted by senior leadership
(Pitt is open, but activities are heavily restricted)

PT-CTRC Precautions for Research Restart

- **All personnel of the PT-CTRC were required to complete the following:**
 - University of Pittsburgh's Campus Restart Training
 - PT-CTRC COVID-19 Mitigation Plan Power Point Presentation
- **Guidelines:**
 - Devise and post mitigation policy **signs** in highly visible locations (i.e., clinic entrance, break room, intervention areas and office spaces)
 - Support the maintenance of the inventory of **supplies** necessary to mitigate COVID-19 as outlined in the PT-CTRC mitigation policies, (face coverings, cleaning products, gloves, and required PPE for assigned tasks).
 - Ensure that proper **cleaning** and disinfection procedures are being followed and performed by the responsible staff member.
 - Monitor that proper **hygiene** is being performed by all staff and participants.
 - Monitor for proper **social distancing** practices throughout the PT-CTRC facility.
 - Support **COVID-19 screening** process for personnel working at the PT-CTRC and for study participants entering the PT-CTRC
 - Support **contact tracing** efforts for possible symptomatic individuals who may have entered the clinic.
 - In the event that a PT-CTRC staff member is confirmed or suspected positive for COVID-19: ensure symptomatic staff member follows Exposure Reporting Protocols; report location of event to EHS so the room can be cleaned by designated personnel; serve as a resource for supervisors and for persons performing contact tracing.
 - Support the PT-CTRC and school to a Highly Restricted Phase (i.e., essential-personnel-only phase) should the need arise. Enact shut-down procedures listed in PT-CTRC mitigation policies.

Vaccination Rollout for Research Personnel

- All patient-facing (category 1a) research personnel have been vaccinated with at least the first dose.
- By the end of March all research personnel will be fully vaccinated.

Shutdown Impact

The shutdown of tier 3 studies has impacted the LB3P in the following ways:

- Cancellation of all participants that had been scheduled (many did not come back after reopening- lost effort);
- Pause and reopen all venues of recruitment;
- Entertain frequent phone calls from participants in waiting list;
- Refresh personnel training because of long hiatus without study activity.

How We're Recruiting in the Era of COVID-19

- **Current recruitment methods**

- Pitt+Me Registry:

- <https://pittplusme.org/studyarms/publicdetails?guid=ffa0b496-503f-4496-91d8-b03c513f9590>

- Clinical Partners: LB3P study brochures will be sent to clinical partner patients that are actively seeking LBP treatment

- Impact of telemedicine and subject concern remain uncertain

- Delay in rollout of vaccine in PA will have an impact

- **Potential method of recruitment**

- Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation Departmental Registry

- **Recruitment to date**

- 50 participants have screened eligible through the Pitt+Me registry

- 38 participants scheduled for the month of March

- 15 participants are currently enrolled

Thank You!

Questions