

## **Guidelines for use of the Gateway MRI Center during the coronavirus pandemic**

- Note: Prior to entering the building, all users must agree to abide by JSNN policies (as outlined on the [JSSN powerpoint safety document](#)) when moving about JSNN building.
  - Confirmation of the information must be documented with the Center. Please download the [confirmation document](#), sign and return to [rjschmit@uncg.edu](mailto:rjschmit@uncg.edu)
- To ensure collaboration with our JSNN and Gateway partners, Level IV operators must go through a brief in-person on-site training prior to restarting their research. Please contact Robin Wilkins at [robinwilkins@gmail.com](mailto:robinwilkins@gmail.com) or [rwilkin@uncg.edu](mailto:rwilkin@uncg.edu) or Randy Schmitz at [rjschmit@uncg.edu](mailto:rjschmit@uncg.edu) to schedule
- Note: The guidelines outlined below apply to only inside of the MRI center.

## **GUIDELINES FOR ACCESSING THE MRI CENTER FACILITY**

### **Facemasks/PPE**

1. Everyone is required to wear a facemask inside the JSNN building and MRI facility—either a personal cloth mask or a surgical mask; during all phases of the research restart, the minimal level of protection required is a facemask.
2. Research participants will be required to wear a cloth or disposable mask. If the participant does not have one, one will be provided by the MRI operator. Participants should be informed of this requirement prior to arriving to JSNN and must agree to wear a mask before entering the JSNN building.
  - a. If possible, participants must wear a cloth or paper facemask during scans. If auditory responses are necessary as part of a research design, we will handle on a case by case basis. If the participant expresses concern about breathing (being able to breathe adequately or potentially hyperventilating during their scan) the mask may need to be removed and either restart the scan or reschedule the scan session if someone is booked directly after.

**Physical Distancing:** Given the single entrance, the below steps need to be taken to maximize physical distancing. Scheduling of participants should ensure that entering and exiting are not occurring simultaneously

1. A maximum of 2 research team members and 1 participant. will be allowed in the MRI facility at any given time.
2. Given the physical structure of the MRI Center, the following guidelines for each room follows.
  - a. Screening Room – Maximum of one investigator and one participant
  - b. Operator Room – Maximum of two investigators
  - c. Scanner Room – Maximum of two investigators and one participant.
    - i. Researchers should minimize the amount of time spent in close proximity to the participant (< 6 feet). It is understood that during the setup time in the scanner that physical distancing will not be completely feasible, the second researcher must try to maintain a 6 ft distance whenever possible.

## **Health Screening Researchers and Participants**

1. Researchers will also be asked to assess their symptoms prior to coming to the MRI Center.
  - a. They must be fever free and completely symptom free for at least 3 days prior to arrival
  - b. If previously diagnosed Covid-19 they must be cleared by their health care provider to return to work.
  - c. If COVID symptoms were present but not diagnosed, at least seven days must pass since the onset of symptoms before return.
2. The day prior to coming to the Center (within 24 hours of the visit), screening for participants will be conducted (via phone, electronic survey, or similar) using the CDC [Coronavirus Self Checker](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html#): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html#>
  - a. If the tool tells them to stay home OR see a health care provider, they cannot enter the MRI facility.
3. Once participants arrive, they should remain outside the JSNN building and call/text a member of the research team to let them know they have arrived.
4. A research team member will meet the participant outside of JSNN and the COVID-19 screening form will be reviewed with the participant and any changes will be noted on the screening form.

## **Interactions with Participants following Health Screening**

1. A single researcher will escort the participant into JSNN. Upon arrival, the researcher will ask the participant to wash their hands (restroom by entrance).
2. As previously, the researcher will then escort participant to scanner (at a 6ft minimum distance).
3. The participant will be taken directly to the screening room to begin the screening process
  - a. The participant will not use the lockers, please have them place personal belongings in screening room.
  - b. Screening form will be laid out ahead of time with pen.
4. Upon completion of study, participant will be escorted back out of building.

## **MRI Center Researcher Hygiene**

1. Signage with handwashing procedures is posted in several prominent locations. These signs should provide the following guidance:
  1. Each individual is required to perform regular hand washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds should be done:
    - Before and after eating.
    - After sneezing, coughing, or nose blowing.
    - After using the restroom.
    - After touching or cleaning surfaces that may be contaminated.

- After using shared equipment and supplies, including keyboards, mouse and phones.
- 2. If you must leave the lab to wash your hands, use a paper towel or other barrier to touch door handles as you return to the lab.
- 3. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- 4. *\*\*\*If researchers prefer to wear gloves while interacting with research participants, gloves must be washed frequently as you would your own hands— follow guidance above.*

### **MRI Sanitation Procedures**

All sanitation procedures (see below) will occur both prior to and following each research participant. Cleaning products are located in the screening room and additionally under the sink cabinet.

#### In General:

1. Before and after each participant, wipe all surfaces in all spaces of the Center (including scanning room) that have the potential to come in contact with researchers or participants. This includes, but is not limited to chairs, pens, tables, door handles, computer keyboards, MR equipment, etc.). Special care should be given to the inside bore of the scanner and door handle to the scanner room.
2. Please allow adequate time to clean the MRI suite before leaving the MRI suite and/or between scan sessions or scheduling scan sessions. Each scan session will be allowed an extra no cost 30 minutes to clean the MRI related facility area. This includes the tables and pens and all equipment used to perform MRI-related research. Please ensure the stimuli computer keyboard and mouse are cleaned.
3. To allow for increased ventilation, an allowance of 60 minutes between participants in scheduling should be followed.
4. Please maintain consistent cleaning of any and all equipment
5. At the end of the day empty all garbage cans into one bag and place the bag outside the lab door near the garbage can in the main hallway

## UNCG MRI Center Covid-19 Research Reminder Checklist

Please use the following checklist reminder for each research participant:

- Confirm that all research staff have considered the [Coronavirus Self Checker](#) for symptoms.
- Wipe surface and all items needed for the participant testing—including pens, keyboards, etc. – with disinfectant.
- Meet Participant outside of JSNN Building.
- Have them use restroom and wash hands for minimum of 20 sec. Then escort to scanner facility directly to screening room maintaining 6 ft distance where possible.
- Finish filling out all forms and review all procedures with the participant prior to entering the scanner room (when possible). The goal is to minimize the amount of time the participant must be in the confined lab space.
- Escort participant when exiting the JSNN building.
- Per stated guidelines, clean and disinfect all equipment used after the participant leaves the MRI Center.