

# BRANCATI CENTER BULLETIN

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Dispatched from Baltimore, Maryland

## KEEPING SAFE: PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

- ❖ **Stay at home:** Marylanders should only leave their homes to access essential services, such as getting groceries, picking up medications, getting healthcare, and going to work that is considered essential. Try to limit the number of trips you make for groceries or other essentials; if you have access to delivery services, consider using them instead. If you need to go to the store for groceries or medications, have only one member of your household go out.
- ❖ **Practice Social Distancing:** Stay at least 6 feet away from others if you have to go out. **Also, avoid having close contact with high-risk family members and avoid visiting family who are not in your household.**
- ❖ **Wear a mask** that covers your mouth and nose when you are out. As of April 18, the state of Maryland requires that individuals wear a mask in all retail stores and on public transportation.
- ❖ **Wash your hands frequently:** Use soap and water, and wash for at least 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice). Avoid touching your face. It's also important to clean frequently touched items such as phones, doorknobs and light-switches.

## A NEW WAY TO KEEP IN TOUCH

*Dear Neighbors,*

*We have long wanted to have a way of keeping in touch with you and sharing information about health and wellness with our community. With the current pandemic, this is a particularly trying, stressful and difficult time for all of us as we focus on keeping ourselves and our families safe and healthy. We thought now, more than ever, may be an important time for us to connect with our community about health and wellness. In this issue, we focus on COVID-19 and we will continue to provide information on how you and your loved ones can stay safe, healthy, and remain connected with important resources during this time.*

*~The Brancati Center Team*

## WHAT IS COVID-19?

**COVID-19** is an illness caused by a new form of a virus, known as coronavirus. While it can cause a mild, flu-like illness in many, in others it can lead to severe symptoms requiring hospitalization. It is spread by tiny drops that come out of an infected person's nose and mouth, such as when coughing or sneezing.

**Common symptoms of COVID-19 include:**

- ❖ Fever (100.4 Fahrenheit or greater)
- ❖ Cough
- ❖ Shortness of breath
- ❖ Sore throat
- ❖ Muscle aches or headache
- ❖ Diarrhea
- ❖ Loss of taste or smell

## WHAT PUTS YOU AT HIGHER RISK FOR HAVING SEVERE COVID-19?

**African-Americans and Latino individuals are being affected by severe COVID-19 more than others.**

Risk factors for severe disease include:

- Being 60 or older
- Having chronic health conditions such as:
  - Diabetes and obesity
  - Lung disease (such as COPD or asthma)
  - Heart disease and high blood pressure
  - Chronic kidney disease
  - Conditions that weaken your immune system

## RESOURCE CORNER

- **Are you an adult over 60 who needs assistance with getting food or other needs?** Call the Maryland Access Point (MAP) at 410-396-CARE (2273) for more information.
- The **Baltimore City Health Department** has information on COVID-19, current status of city services and special resources: <https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/>
- **Johns Hopkins** has information on COVID-19, including answers to frequently asked questions: <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/covid-19-basics/faq>

For additional resources, please check out our website and Facebook page!



Website: <https://www.brancaticenter.com>

Facebook: @brancaticenter

Email: [brancaticenter@jhmi.edu](mailto:brancaticenter@jhmi.edu)

The Johns Hopkins Brancati Center is based in the city of Baltimore, Maryland.

It is the mission of the Brancati Center to improve the health of communities by developing new models of healthcare in partnership with community organizations. Our focus is on providing access to evidence-based programs through community partnerships.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF AM CONCERNED ABOUT HAVING COVID-19?

- **Call** your primary care doctor to discuss your symptoms; you can discuss whether or not you need to get tested and what you can do to keep yourself and your household members safe. Many primary care offices are limiting in-person visits and offering telemedicine visits now, and it is important to **call first**.
- **If you don't have a primary care doctor, you can call the city's hotline 211** for assistance connecting with medical professionals who can help determine whether you need to be tested.
- If you have symptoms that are severe, like difficulty breathing or chest pain, and you think you need emergency care, call 911 and tell the dispatcher your symptoms. If you are having someone take you to an emergency department, try to call ahead to let them know you are on your way.
- **Self-isolate at home:** Limit your contact with household members. Stay in one room as much as possible. Use a separate bathroom if you can. If you need to share a bathroom, clean it after you use it. Wear a cloth covering around your nose and mouth if you have to be around others. Ask your healthcare provider about when you are safe to stop self-isolating.

## STAY WELL, STAY CONNECTED

With all the uncertainty we face and concerns you may have about friends and family, we realize it may be difficult to focus on self-care right now, but it remains important! Many people are experiencing a great deal of stress at this time. Remember to support yourself while you are supporting others:

- ❖ **Connect with others:** While we all practice social distancing, it is still important to remain connected! While you check in on your friends and loved-ones via phone/text/FaceTime, remember to reach out to those who will also check in on you.
- ❖ **Maintain a schedule:** Although so much of our day-to-day lives has changed, remember to continue to sleep regularly, eat well-balanced meals and make time to exercise. Also make sure you have time to unwind each day.
- ❖ **Stay Active.** Set a timer/reminder to stand for at least 1-minute every hour or stand up every time you take a drink of water. Schedule a 10-15 minute activity break mid-morning & mid-afternoon.

(source: CDC: <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp> and Kathy Michalski, RDN)