

BRANCATI CENTER BULLETIN

Dispatched from Baltimore, Maryland

VOL. 1. ISSUE 3

MAY 22, 2020



KEEP YOURSELF SAFE and HEALTHY

As of May 15, the governor of Maryland has lifted the “stay-at-home” order, and replaced it with a “safer at home” policy, which lifts some restrictions. However, the city of Baltimore still has a “stay-at-home” order.

Even as restrictions are lifted, it remains important to take measures to keep yourself and your loved ones safe.

Please continue to:

- ◆ Wear a mask when you are out.
- ◆ Practice social distancing.
- ◆ Wash your hands and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched.
- ◆ If you think you have COVID-19, or were exposed to COVID-19, call your primary care provider or, if in Baltimore City, call 2-1-1.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

- In Maryland, as of 5/21/20, there are a total of 43,531 people with COVID-19. The total number of cases of COVID-19 in Maryland continues to rise.
- 2 of the top 10 hardest hit zip codes in the state in May were in the Baltimore region: **21224** and **21215**.

[Source: BCHD]

Continuing the Fight Against COVID-19

Dear Neighbors,

In this Issue of the Brancati Center Bulletin, we focus more on staying healthy during the COVID-19 pandemic. As the fight against COVID-19 continues, we have witnessed that certain communities have been more affected than others. We take a moment in this bulletin to reflect on these health disparities. As we continue to see more cases in our city and state, we also continue to focus on ways that you can stay safe and healthy.

-The Brancati Center Team

COVID-19 and Our Communities

- Throughout the US, we have seen that racial and ethnic minorities are at especially high-risk of COVID-19—in terms of cases, hospitalizations and deaths.
- **In Baltimore we have seen African American and Latino populations affected more than other groups.** As of 5/17/20:
 - ◇ Over 50% of COVID-19 cases and over 70% of COVID-19 deaths were among African American adults.
 - ◇ Over 14% of COVID-19 cases are among Hispanic individuals although Hispanic adults make up only about 5% of Baltimore’s population. [source: Baltimore City Health Department]
- **Why are we seeing these disparities?** Racial and ethnic minorities:
 - ◇ May be less able to socially distance because they are more likely to live in multi-generational homes & densely populated areas
 - ◇ May be less able to work remotely because they are more likely to be in jobs that are considered “essential”
 - ◇ May have had poorer access to healthcare prior to the pandemic



What Can I Do to Help My Community?

Follow public health recommendations, such as practicing social distancing, and **encourage your friends, family and neighbors to do the same.**

You may want to consider training to be a **contact tracer**. A contact tracer helps to identify and outreach to people who have been in contact with someone with COVID-19. They provide contacts with education and guidance regarding quarantining, testing and care. Contract tracing is an important part of helping control the spread of COVID-19. Many public health departments will be hiring more contact tracers.

Johns Hopkins is offering a course an online course on contact tracing. Check out: <https://www.coursera.org/learn/covid-19-contact-tracing?edocomorp=covid-19-contact-tracing>

I Have A Family Member with COVID-19 In My Household.

How Can I Care for Them Safely?

- People at higher risk for severe illness with COVID-19 (such as adults over the age of 65 and people with chronic conditions) should avoid being the caregiver for the family member.
- If possible, **have the family member use a separate bedroom and bathroom to self-isolate from the rest of the family as much as possible.**
- If the family member has to be around others in the home, have them wear a cloth face covering. (Do not use cloth face coverings on young children or anyone who may have trouble removing the covering or anyone with trouble breathing).
- As the caregiver, you may also consider wearing a mask when you are in their company. Also, wear gloves any time you touch objects the person came in contact with. Wash your hands after removing the gloves.
- Make sure any shared spaces have good air flow (open a window).
- Avoid sharing personal items like phones, towels, bedding, or dishes with the family member.



Source: CDC

RESOURCE CORNER

- ◆ **Worried about an older loved one? Or are you 65 + and would like someone to check-in with you?** The Maryland Department of Aging's Senior Call Check program calls patients through an automated call every day, and contacts a family member if they do not pick up after 3 tries. You can register yourself or a loved one by calling 1-866-50-CHECK or by visiting aging.maryland.gov.
- ◆ The Baltimore City Health Department has a **guide of food distribution sites**. Visit <https://coronavirus.baltimorecity.gov/food-distribution-sites>
- ◆ Visit the Brancati Center Facebook page and website for additional resources

Stay Well, Stay Connected



There are so many reasons it is important to focus not only on our physical health, but also our mental health right now. With the COVID-19 pandemic, we all can feel stress due to worrying about our own health, the health of our loved ones, our finances and our futures.

If you are feeling stressed, take a break from the news or social media. Find an enjoyable activity instead, and take time to unwind.

Social distancing and staying at home can also make it difficult for us to maintain the supportive relationships that may have helped us deal with stress and difficult times in the past. **That is why it is even more important that we reach out to our friends and family now.**

Set a time to have regular phone or FaceTime calls with your loved ones.

Source: CDC



We want to hear from you!

Website: www.brancaticenter.com

Email: brancaticenter@jhmi.edu

Facebook: [@brancaticenter](https://www.facebook.com/brancaticenter)

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