

BRANCATI CENTER BULLETIN

Dispatched from Baltimore, Maryland

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KEEP YOURSELF SAFE and HEALTHY

We are continuing to see concerning trends regarding rapidly rising COVID-19 cases in several states in the US. In Maryland, we continue to add new cases daily.

It remains important that we continue to take precautions to protect ourselves and others against COVID-19:

- **Wear a mask when you are out.**
 - It is still recommended that people stay at home as much as possible, particularly those at high-risk for severe illness.
 - Follow social distancing guidelines even when outdoors.
 - Wash your hands and disinfect surfaces.
 - The American Academy of Pediatrics has information for parents/guardians and summer camp operators regarding safety in the time of COVID-19: <https://bit.ly/AAPCampGuidance>. For parents and guardians, it is advised they discuss safety with their pediatrician and make sure their child is up to date on vaccines.
 - **If you think you have COVID-19, or were exposed to COVID-19:**
 - self-isolate
- AND
- ◆ contact your primary care provider or call 2-1-1 if you do not have a primary care provider and live in Baltimore City.
 - ◆ Also see the “Resource Corner” for more information on testing sites

CHECKING BACK IN

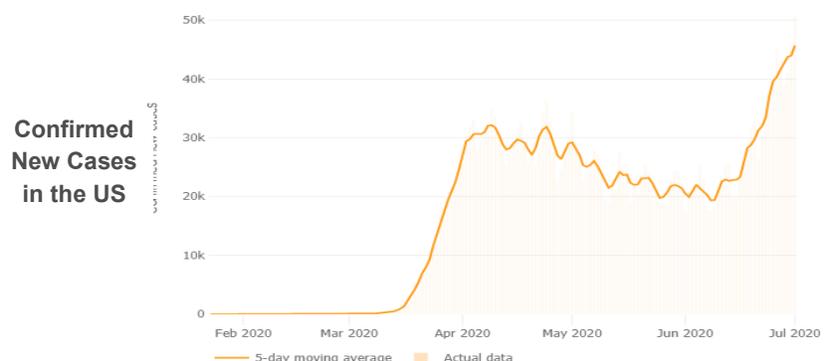
Dear Neighbors,

In our last issue, we reflected on addressing racism and the impact of racism on health and well-being. We asked for your thoughts on steps we as a Center could take to address racism and promote equity. We still look forward to hearing from you. Please do take a moment to write to us; our contact information is on page 2.

As the COVID-19 pandemic accelerates in our country, we continue to review the trends highlight ways to remain safe and seek testing. This issue, we also continue with our discussion on managing certain chronic medical conditions with a focus on diabetes.

Moving forward, we plan on putting out an issue monthly, with “special issues” as needed.

COVID-19 in the US: Troubling Trends



[Source: JHU Coronavirus Resource Page]

Unfortunately, our country is experiencing rapid growth in COVID-19 cases, as the graph above shows. The orange line shows a 5 day average of the number of new cases, which has steadily increased since June. Certain states are showing very troubling trends, including several states in the South, such as Florida and Alabama, and states such as Arizona and California. States that had initially seen a decrease in cases are now experiencing an increase. The concern is that failure to control COVID-19 in certain parts of the country will affect all states eventually.

Why do we think we are seeing these trends? Public health experts believe that this fast rise in cases is due to re-opening too early and the public not following recommendations, especially wearing masks and avoiding large gatherings. We must all recognize the continued threat COVID-19 poses to us and our local community, and the potential for cases to increase as we try to re-open.

COVID-19 in Maryland: The Current Situation

- Since the end of June, the number of new cases in Maryland has started to rise, from around 400 daily to 600-700 daily new cases.
- The 21224 zip code in Baltimore continues to be among the top 5 in the state for total number of cases

[Source: Maryland.gov]

Managing Chronic Diseases During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Diabetes

Your primary care doctor's office will be taking precautions against the spread of COVID-19. For most practices, this means that routine visits are being done via video (or phone) rather than in the doctor's office. If you have **diabetes** here are some things you can do to work with your healthcare team to manage your blood sugars:

- Follow the physical activity and diet guidelines you have discussed with your provider. If you haven't discussed these, ask your provider for guidance and/or if you can be referred to a nutritionist.
- Take your medications as prescribed. For certain medications, it may be possible to get a 90 day supply. This may help you to avoid running out and also going to the pharmacy too frequently.
- If your provider has asked you to check your blood sugars, check them as recommended and keep a log of your blood sugar readings. Make sure you write down when you checked your blood sugar, when you last ate (and what you ate). **Have your blood sugar log handy if you are having a televisit. Bring your log and glucose monitor to your in-person visits with your provider.**
- Make sure you know when your provider wants you to contact him/her based on your blood sugar readings. This could be for both high and low blood sugars.
- Be sure to let your provider know if your blood sugar has been low or if you've had signs or symptoms of low blood sugars (such as feely shaky, sweaty, lightheaded, having headaches), as this can be life-threatening and may require an adjustment to your medications.



RESOURCE CORNER

Community-based COVID-19 testing:
Johns Hopkins Medicine is bringing testing for COVID-19 to neighborhoods that are considered "hotspots" around Baltimore.

The next date is:
July 23 (5pm- 7pm)
at Sacred Heart Church
600 S Conkling Street
Baltimore, MD 21224
Please keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for updates as new community-based sites are announced.

Find additional testing sites in Maryland, visit:

<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing>

What should my blood sugar be?

Your provider may ask you to check your blood sugars regularly if you have diabetes.



Here are general recommendations on goal blood sugars for people living with diabetes, but remember that **you should always discuss individual goals with your provider.**

- Before a meal (fasting):
80 to 130 mg/dL
- 2 hours after meals:
Less than 180 mg/dL

Source: ADA

Stay Well, Stay Connected: Reducing Sugar Intake

An important part of controlling blood sugars, and in general having a healthy diet, is limiting your intake of sugar.

Looking for low-sugar or sugar free alternatives is one way to start. But also know how to find *added sugars* in your foods; these may appear as ingredients such as "syrups" (like corn syrup), nectars, honey, molasses, and fructose. Look out for these additional ingredients, including in foods such as yogurt, cereals, drinks and condiments (like ketchup or sauces).

Source: <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/finding-the-hidden-sugar-in-the-foods-you-eat>



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.