



Office of the Executive Vice Dean and Chief Scientific Officer

Dear All,

On Friday, the University shared the below message to the Penn community about worrisome trends in COVID positivity rates in our undergraduate student population. At this time, **I recommend that we pause the activities of undergraduate students performing research in PSOM until we see the trends reverse.**

In rare cases, exceptions may be requested with the approval of the Department Chair and my office; such requests should be accompanied by full justification and a revised work plan that describes how the work can be done safely. If your research plans currently involve undergraduate students participating in on-campus research, please find ways for them to continue to engage with your group via remote research activities. Recognizing that on-site research is an important part of the educational experience for many undergraduates, we will work to facilitate their in-person opportunities as soon as possible. We will continue to monitor this situation closely and work in partnership with our University colleagues.

I remain confident in our ability to operate safely at the School of Medicine. The average test positivity rate at the school is hovering around 0.2% (0.10% in the last seven days), as measured via the COVID SAFE program. We are accomplishing this through strong participation in testing efforts through Penn Cares and COVID SAFE, vigilant mask wearing, safe physical distancing, and frequent hand washing. We will continue to adapt and adjust as necessary to protect all members of our community.

Stay safe and be well,
Jon

Jon Epstein, MD | EVD/CSO

<https://www.med.upenn.edu/evdresearch/>

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From: Public Safety <University_of_Pennsylvania@upenn.edu>
Sent: Friday, February 5, 2021 6:32:30 PM
Subject: UPennAlert issued at 2/5/21 6:32 PM

A MESSAGE TO THE PENN COMMUNITY ABOUT COVID POSITIVITY
RATES FROM:

Wendell Pritchett, Provost
Craig Carnaroli, Executive Vice President
Benoit Dubé, Associate Provost and Chief Wellness Officer

The University is seeing worrisome trends in the positivity rate of COVID-19 in our undergraduate student population this week. This situation is concerning amidst the emergence of highly transmissible variants in nearby communities.

It is critical that students only gather with their pod while watching the Super Bowl or when doing any other activities. Do not gather with people outside of your pod.

We have been sending students home for conduct not in line with the Student Campus Compact, and will continue to do so throughout the semester.

Remain vigilant—mask up, maintain a safe distance, wash your hands. Don't be the weakest link; if trends don't reverse, we will move into Campus Alert Level 3—a campus-wide Safer at Home order—imposing new restrictions as early as next week.

For more information, go to: www.publicsafety.upenn.edu Public Safety