

COVID-19 Health System Updates

June 8, 2022, Wednesday

We are starting to see signs that the current wave of COVID-19 may be leveling off.

As of this morning, we had 119 inpatients with COVID-19 across the system, 11 of whom were in critical care. These numbers have been holding broadly steady for about two weeks now. The New York State seven-day average test positivity rates as of yesterday were 5.0 percent for New York City, 8.9 percent for Long Island, and 7.1 percent for the mid-Hudson region; these have been trending downward in recent days.

This is no time to let down our guard, of course, and I do want to remind you that masks are still required in all Mount Sinai facilities, not just in patient care areas. The only exceptions are if you are alone in a private office, or eating or drinking at least six feet away from other people. But the trend is hopeful, and if it continues and we are able to change those rules, I will let you know. You can always find the latest policies [here](#).

While I have your attention, I also want to update you on another infectious disease you may have heard about: monkeypox. This is an outbreak, not a pandemic, and there is no reason to fear at this point that it will become anywhere near as bad as COVID-19. Nevertheless, we do expect to see cases in our hospitals, so here is what you need to know:

Since Judith Aberg, MD, and Bernard Camins, MD, first updated providers about this worldwide outbreak on May 20, seven cases of monkeypox have been identified in New York City and 31 cases in the United States. While a majority of the first patients identified with monkeypox reported travel to an international destination 21 days before diagnosis, the infection has also been diagnosed in close or intimate contacts of patients who have not traveled.

High-risk exposure to monkeypox among health care workers is extremely rare, and we recommend the following steps to prevent exposures:

- Identify any potential case by asking incoming patients and visitors each of the questions in the infectious diseases screening tool.
- Isolate anyone suspected of having monkeypox in a private room immediately. Patients should be placed in airborne and contact precautions. Don an N95 respirator, gown, and gloves when providing clinical care.
- Inform public health officials for further instructions and your respective infection prevention department.

Mount Sinai Health System guidance when evaluating a patient suspected of having monkeypox is available [on the intranet](#), and you can read a short Q&A with Dr. Camins [here](#). Additional information is available from the [New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

Finally, if you were issued one of those New York City Department of Transportation parking permits during the first wave of the pandemic in March 2020, you can keep using it for the next few weeks. No new permits are being issued, but the existing ones were recently extended through Thursday, June 30.

Thank you again for everything you do to provide safe, equitable, and compassionate care to our patients.

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