



# UNDER THE MICROSCOPE

The Dartmouth College laboratory safety newsletter

June 2020



DARTMOUTH  
Environmental  
Health & Safety

Specific questions? Ask EHS: 603-646-1762 or [ehs@dartmouth.edu](mailto:ehs@dartmouth.edu)

## Coronavirus and Human Specimens

- Does your lab receive clinical samples or similar human materials?
- Have you considered that they may contain SARS-CoV-2?
- What is your plan for handling these specimens safely?



Because of potential pathogens, human specimens are generally handled at Biosafety Level 2.

**For most clinical samples or similar human materials, standard BSL-2 practices are appropriate for protection against possible SARS-CoV-2.**

Remember, the novel coronavirus isn't the only infectious agent that human samples may have. BSL-2 is used because it is suitable for most pathogens that may exist in human materials.

### Biosafety Level 2 *Rapid Refresher:*

- Wash hands regularly
- No food or drink in the lab!
- Wear gloves and lab coat at minimum
- Use eye protection
- Use a certified biosafety cabinet
- Check your eye wash weekly
- Avoid sharps when possible
- Decontaminate cultures when done
- Dispose of hazardous materials properly
- Use non-porous chairs
- Control laboratory access
- Keep your training current
- Know what to do after an exposure
- Disinfect surfaces when done

### When might you consider adding additional safeguards?

- Using samples from infected patients\*
- Using untested sputum, lung biopsy, or fecal samples, etc.
- Receiving samples from outside institutions
- When culturing human specimens\*
- If you are immunocompromised or have other comorbidities or risk factors
- Other unique situations not listed here

*\*Note: This refers to the actual specimens. Further manipulation or propagation of the live virus requires BSL-3 facilities and is NOT allowed at Dartmouth. Institutional Biosafety Committee approval is required for all biological research to ensure biohazards can be adequately managed.*

**If you have concerns about safe handling of human samples, have a special situation, or want any other assistance, please contact EHS. We're here to help!**

*EHS Staff: Bree, Caitlyn, Erik, Jason, Jeff, Mark, Matt, Meg, Molly, Ryan*