As the world's most trusted leader in health care, Mayo Clinic is committed to providing a comprehensive response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Mayo is bringing together its expertise in patient care, research and education to advance tests and treatments for patients. The information in this update includes current policies, but this is an ever-evolving situation. For the latest updates, go to the Mayo Clinic News Network.

Science needs to guide us, says Mayo Clinic's Dr. Farrugia

In an interview with CBS' "Face the Nation," Gianrico Farrugia, M.D., Mayo Clinic's president and CEO, emphasized the need to focus on saving lives with a multifaceted public health approach "driven by the science, not by conjecture." He described how Mayo Clinic has been a leading force in developing and expanding capabilities, including serologic testing that identifies immunity to COVID-19 and exploring potential therapies. One such therapy Dr. Farrugia discussed is convalescent plasma therapy, which uses immune-rich plasma from people who have recovered from COVID-19 to treat others.

Dr. Farrugia highlighted that Mayo Clinic, in partnership with other organizations, is leading on several new therapies to flatten and bend the curve. He said that efforts need to be on preventing patients from entering the ICU or shortening their ICU stay. He added that we need to: "Make sure that an ICU stay is as brief as possible. If you can go from 10 days on a ventilator to five days on a ventilator, then you can double the number of available ventilators."

Dr. Farrugia also praised health care workers and gave thanks for the heroic work they are doing around the clock to save lives and prevent further spread of the virus.

You can read the full transcript of the interview here.

Mayo Clinic Laboratories continues to expand testing capability

Mayo Clinic continues to advance testing capabilities for COVID-19 detection. Laboratories in Arizona, Florida and Minnesota have performed more than 42,000 tests to date. Currently, Mayo performs more than 6,000 tests daily. Capacity will continue to grow over the coming days and weeks as more testing platforms can be added. In addition, Mayo is now performing testing for health care systems and providers in more than 40 states.

In addition to molecular testing being used today, Mayo has taken strong action to invest in rapidly deploying serologic testing. Combined with molecular testing, serologic testing will be a powerful tool in diagnosing COVID-19. It could allow for screening health care workers and others for immunity, making
it possible to determine if staff are safe to return to work. It also could identify people who have become immune to the virus as potential "serum donors" for treatment. Serologic testing also will be an important tool to understand how COVID-19 has spread through the population and how the human body responds. These are some of the key medical and scientific components necessary to make sound decisions regarding social distancing and community mitigation efforts.

Mayo is ramping up its ability to offer serologic tests based on tests developed and used in regions that have been affected abroad. Mayo encouraged public officials to advance an accelerated regulatory pathway to offer serologic testing and expand immediate access to samples needed for test validation. These tests, which are forthcoming shortly, may be able to serve as a national resource in addressing the pandemic.

**Expanded virtual care access for all patients**

Health care providers have been granted greater flexibility from federal and state regulators during the pandemic to diagnose and treat patients through telehealth options. This allows Mayo to continue to deliver quality care to all its patients while maintaining shelter-in-place orders, as well as keeping hospitals and clinics available for a surge of people with COVID-19. Mayo Clinic care teams may offer patients the option of a video or phone appointment, conducted from a provider's location to a patient's home, instead of an in-person appointment. This is a secure system. Patient privacy is important to Mayo, and it will be protected.

If you are a Mayo Clinic patient, you will need a Patient Online Services account to use video appointments. If you don't have an account, you can quickly create one [here](#). On the web, select the Get Care Now button and chose the "Express Care Online" option. On the Mayo Clinic app, select "Express Care Online" next to the COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool link. Follow the online instructions and submit your questionnaire.

When you log in to Patient Online Services on the web or through the Mayo Clinic app, you'll also see a link to a COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool. Click on that tool, and you'll be asked to answer a few questions. You'll immediately receive a response providing information on whether you may need to be tested for COVID-19 or not.

Patients between 13 and 17 years old must have their own Patient Online Services account to participate in a video appointment. If your child needs to create this account, you and your child together must call Mayo Clinic Customer Assistance at 1-877-858-0398.

This [video](#) explains how one Mayo Clinic patient used a video appointment after her surgery.

**Ongoing need of blood donation at Mayo Clinic, nationwide**

Healthy blood donors are urged to make appointments to meet the ongoing demand for blood products. Mayo Clinic and health organizations nationwide are trying to prevent a blood shortage while helping patients in need of blood products. Social distancing and stay-at-home guidelines due to COVID-19 have made the blood donation process more challenging, but people can still donate blood. For those who may be worried about becoming infected while donating blood, respiratory viruses have never been reported to be transmitted through blood or blood components, according to the World Health Organization. To find out if you are eligible to give blood and find out where you can donate, visit the [Mayo Clinic Blood Donor Program website](#).
Guidance on social distancing to stay healthy during COVID-19

At least 30 states have issued orders requiring residents to stay home, except for certain workers or activities. These orders cover 250 million Americans or roughly 75% of the national population.

A major component of the stay-at-home orders is the long-proven concept of social distancing. No doubt, social distancing can be a lonely, isolating time. However, because the virus is transmitted through respiratory droplets when someone infected coughs or sneezes, if you breathe in the droplets, or they land on your eyes, nose, or mouth, then you are at risk of getting infected. This is why social distancing is so important. If you stay beyond the recommended 6-foot social distancing margin, the risk of being exposed drops dramatically. Social distancing has been shown to be effective in slowing the spread of infection during many outbreaks.

Examples of social distancing measures include:

- Avoiding large crowds (You may leave your home to pick up essentials, such as food, but go alone, if possible. Some stores only allow a certain number of people in the store at a time. Consider having a family member drive you, drop you at the door and pick you up. The fewer people in the store, the better.)
- Encouraging people to work from home
- Avoiding the use of public transportation
- Postponing hosting guests, including play dates with children or extended family gatherings

Mayo Clinic offers a number of resources on how you can help yourself stay healthy during this pandemic, including guidance on how to practice social distancing, including the "Get Healthy, Stay Healthy Adhering to Social Distancing" episode of the "Mayo Clinic Q&A" podcast.

What happens to your body when you have COVID-19?

If you show any sign of possible COVID-19 symptoms, call your local health care provider. Your provider or a nurse will direct you to the dedicated COVID-19 Nurse Line. If you meet testing criteria, you will be directed to one of the local testing locations. As this virus spreads rapidly, help Mayo minimize potential exposure to other patients by not coming into a clinic or hospital to be tested. You should call your local provider first to find out how to be evaluated.

Check the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website for additional updates on COVID-19. For all your COVID-19 coverage, go to the Mayo Clinic News Network.

COVID-19 Update is prepared by Mayo Clinic's Division of External Relations.
It will be published as needed.