

I hope you and your loved ones are healthy! While I eagerly look forward to meeting again, your safety is of utmost importance to me. At this time, I am beginning in-person sessions on a case-by-case basis and only on the outdoor terrace. Once New Jersey enters Phase 3, I will consider adding the option of an indoor session (as long as the transmission rate remains less than 1 and again on a case-by-case basis). I will plan to wear a [clearmask](#) to allow you to see my facial expressions. Telehealth via SPRUCE will remain the **default** treatment modality unless we agree to in-person sessions.

The air filtration system in the suite is new with upgraded filters (MERV-13) that meet OSHA recommendations. Also, the rate of fresh outdoor air exchange within the suite is 95 cubic ft per minute and the HVAC system operates 24 hours per day/7 days per week. The overall air exchange rate within the suite is 6.4 air exchanges per hour. To further increase the circulation of fresh outdoor air within my office, the tall (78-inch) windows can now open fully. There is an air purifier in my office with a prefilter, a carbon filter, and a True HEPA filter (in addition to a UV light) that filters the office air almost 7 times per hour. For a full list of safety measures please visit kbhealth.org/in-person (*Infection Prevention Protocol*). These safety measures are based upon guidance from the American Medical Association¹, the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security², Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)³, and the American Society of Heating Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE)⁴ among others.

Please contact me if you would like to request an in-person session so that we can discuss the potential risks and benefits. Patients for whom the risks of in-person sessions could outweigh the benefits include those who are at a higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 or those who have close contact with individuals at higher risk. CDC now warns that among adults, risk increases steadily as you age, and it's not just those over the age of 65 who are at increased risk for severe illness. Also, those with the following conditions are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19⁵:

- Chronic kidney disease
- Serious heart conditions (heart failure, coronary artery disease or cardiomyopathies)
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index of 30 or higher)
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes

If we agree to in-person sessions then:

1. Review and sign the required **Consent Form** (kbhealth.org/in-person).

AND

2. Before **all** in-person sessions, review the **COVID-19 QUESTIONNAIRE** (kbhealth.org/in-person) and send a SPRUCE text within 24 hours of your appointment stating either **"No to all questions"** or **"Yes to at least one question."** If you answer **"Yes to at least one question"** do **not** come into the office until we determine the next best steps. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Best regards,
Mona Maaty MD

¹ "COVID-19: A Physician Practice Guide to Reopening"

² Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security "Operational Toolkit for Businesses Considering Reopening or Expanding Operations in COVID-19"

³ "OSHA Guidance Summary: Preparing Workplaces for COVID-19"

⁴ "Guidance for Building Operations During the COVID-19 Pandemic"

⁵ <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-with-medical-conditions.html>