

Risk Matrix

The Risk Matrix for Research Projects is intended to assist Faculty Researchers with the creation of their safety plans. A safety plan outlining a research project's protocols to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 is required for all cases where 2-metres distancing is not possible or when other high-level risk factors exist (e.g. density issues; physical contact required). If the activity occurring for the research project is not listed below, please reach out to your FORC for assistance.

Risk Mitigation

Based on the activity outlined below, you will be required to demonstrate that risks can be mitigated. Below is a reference of the recommended strategies to adopt.

Surface/Touch Activity Occurring for Research Project	Density / Physical Distancing Categories with Risk Mitigation Strategies to Adopt			
	1 person in a room/area at a time	2+ people in room/area Below area capacity and can maintain 2-metre physical distancing	2+ people in room/area Above room capacity and/or cannot maintain 2-metre physical distancing	Physical contact between researchers and/or participants
Common Touch Points and Surfaces (e.g. doors, computers, tables, etc)	A, C	B,C	B, C, D, F	B,C,F,H, I
Re-useable lab equipment (e.g. test tubes, beakers, etc)	A, C	B,C	B, C, D, F	B,C,D,F,H,I
Disposable Supplies (e.g. cloths, testing agents)	E, C	B,C,E	B, C, D, E, F	B,C,D,E,F,H,I
Disposable wearables (e.g. mouth pieces, electrodes, etc)	E	B,C,E	B, C, D, E, F	B,C,D,E,F,H,I
Non-disposable wearables (e.g. eye trackers, electrodes, EEG caps)	-	B,C	B, C, D, F, G	B,C,D,F,G,H,I
Non-disposable equipment (e.g. bikes, treadmills, robotic arm, ACE equipment)	-	B,C	B, C, D, F,G	B,C,D,F,G,H,I
Invasive Procedures as defined by the Ontario Tech Research Ethics Board ¹	-	B,C	B, C, D, F,G	B,C,D,F,G,H,I

Risk Mitigation Strategies:

- A: Ensure all touch points fully sanitized before departure.
- B: Ensure all touch points fully sanitized before and after every use.
- C: All persons to wear 3-ply non-medical masks or face covering or, if not possible, perform the research activity without others in the room.
- D: Wear gloves and eye-protection at all times.

- E: Create standard operating procedure to outline the process for immediate safe disposal of lab consumables after use.
- F: Modify or create standard operating procedures so that updated information is included in lab documentation. (e.g. increased risk language, consent form for REB, lab space planning, enhanced cleaning practices, etc.)
- G: Create comprehensive disinfection procedures for research being performed (e.g. disinfection of invasive equipment used).
- H: Strong consideration must be given to finding methods for allowing participants to self-administer study procedures if possible; except in cases where the procedure is a controlled act defined under the Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991.
- I: Researcher to wear face shield when within 2-metres of participants.

Please note: Given the dynamic nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, the risk matrix and mitigation requirements may be revised to reflect new and/or emerging information. Regardless, operational PPE use must still apply.

1. The Ontario Tech REB identifies the following procedures as invasive:
 - performing a procedure on tissue below the dermis, below the surface of a mucous membrane.
 - proposal involving administering a substance by injection or inhalation.
 - involve the use of radioactive material or radiation treatment devices. (For example, ingestion of a dye for imaging procedures, x-ray procedures). - involve an application of an electrical, thermal or magnetic modality to a human participant -(e.g., MRI, TMS, tDCS, electrical stimulation, heat, ultrasound, ice, etc.)