



Mayo Clinic [COVID-19](#) experts and focus areas

Updated Dec. 3, 2021

To seek interviews with Mayo experts, contact [Mayo Clinic's News Bureau](#). Experts are in Rochester, Minnesota, unless noted. VideoLink ReadyCam studios are available. For more information, visit the [Mayo Clinic News Network](#).

Aging

[James Kirkland, M.D., Ph.D.](#), geriatrician and endocrinologist

- Topic: Studying senescent cells as potential therapy for COVID-19.
- Also called zombie cells, senescent cells are cells the body has directed to shut down but that refuse to die. In [one clinical trial at Mayo](#), researchers are examining if the drug can prevent COVID-19 patients from getting worse.
- Dr. Kirkland audio example: "[Aging research: Mayo Clinic Radio Health Minute](#)"

Bioethics in pandemics

[Karen Meagher, Ph.D.](#), medical bioethicist

- Topics: Issues in population health; managing ethical questions on a large scale

[Richard Sharp, Ph.D.](#), head of Mayo's bioethics programs

- Topic: Ethics of medical practice in patient care, access and treatment
- Dr. Sharp video example: [National Press Foundation interview](#)

Cardiology

[Michael Ackerman, M.D., Ph.D.](#), genetic cardiologist

- Topics: Which heart patients may have [worse COVID-19 outcomes](#); hydroxychloroquine treatment and effects on the heart; cardiomyopathy as a result of COVID-19 and effects on athletes
- Dr. Ackerman audio example: "[Cardiac risks of off-label drugs to treat COVID-19](#)"

[Leslie Cooper Jr., M.D.](#), cardiologist

- Topics: Cardiovascular effects of COVID-19; myocarditis; pericarditis; and heart disease in athletes
- Dr. Cooper video example: "[COVID-19 cardiac involvement on the rise](#)"
- Location: Jacksonville, Florida, and Rochester, Minnesota

[Paul Friedman, M.D.](#), cardiac electrophysiologist

- Topics: Artificial intelligence (AI) technology development and use with COVID-19; wearable consumer technology, such as Apple watch; and AI-enabled ECG
- Dr. Friedman video example: "[Artificial Intelligence in Cardiology: A Futuristic View of AI in Cardiology](#)"
- Twitter handle: @drpaulfriedman

[Joerg Herrmann, M.D.](#), preventive cardiologist

- Topic: How COVID-19 affects treatment approach for cancer patients who have, or are at higher risk for, heart failure
- Dr. Herrmann video example: "[60 Seconds With Dr. Joerg Herrmann on Cardio-Oncology](#)"

[Suraj Kapa, M.D.](#), cardiac electrophysiologist

- Topics: AI technology development and use with COVID-19; [distinguishing between COVID-19 and heart failure](#) when there are common symptoms; virtual reality; and augmented reality
- Dr. Kapa video example: "[Virtual reality in medicine, beyond bulky goggles](#)"

[Stephen Kopecky, M.D.](#), preventive cardiologist

- Topics: [Heart health concerns](#) during COVID-19 and management of heart disease; Apple watch heart data considerations
- Dr. Kopecky video example: "[Fat is not inert — it's active](#)"

Contact tracing

[Laura Breeher, M.D.](#), occupational medicine specialist

- Topics: Contact tracing; risk assessment; quarantine advice for people; and return-to-work assessment following quarantine or isolation

[John Halamka, M.D.](#), president of Mayo Clinic Platform

- Topics: Contact tracing; digital health care
- Dr. Halamka audio example: "[Creating new care delivery possibilities](#)"

Connected Care, COVID-19 Front-Line Care Team and Remote Patient Monitoring Team

- **About [Connected Care](#):** Teams deliver health care remotely so referring providers and patients have access to Mayo Clinic's expertise and knowledge through technologies. Connected Care includes Patient Online Services, the online patient portal; internal eConsults; tablets for use at the bedside; patient appointments via phone or video; and remote patient monitoring.
- **About the [COVID-19 Front-Line Care Team](#):** A team of experts determines if a patient with COVID-19 should be monitored at home, go to the emergency department or be admitted to the hospital. This team coordinates the care of patients hospitalized for COVID-19.
- **About [Remote Patient Monitoring Team](#):** When patients are diagnosed with COVID-19, they are required to self-isolate until the infection is cleared, often for at least two weeks. For patients at risk for complications, the Remote Patient Monitoring Program offers comprehensive support at home. Using medical technology and devices sent to patients' homes, patients' vital signs and symptoms can be screened remotely. Remote monitoring can be performed before or after hospitalization.

[Ravindra Ganesh, M.B.B.S, M.D.](#), internist and director of Mayo Clinic's COVID-19 Front-Line Care Team in the Midwest

[Tufia Haddad, M.D.](#), medical director of Mayo Clinic Center for Connected Care's Remote Patient Monitoring Team

[Ryan Hurt, M.D., Ph.D.](#), internist

- Twitter handle: @ryanhurt9296

[Steve Ommen, M.D.](#), cardiologist and medical director for Mayo's Center for Connected Care

- Topic: [Use of digital care/telemedicine during COVID-19](#) pandemic, including patient care and effects of regulations
- Dr. Ommen video example: "[Hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, sudden death and implantable defibrillators](#)"

[Jason A. Post, M.D.](#), internist

COVID-19 tracking

[Sean Dowdy, M.D.](#), gynecologist, Midwest Quality chair

- Topics: Publicly available [tracking tool](#) features latest COVID-19 data for every U.S. county and Washington, D.C.; Mayo insight on how to assess risk and plan accordingly

Critical care

[Daniel Brown, M.D., Ph.D.](#), anesthesiologist and critical care specialist

- Topics: Intensive care, including ventilator management; medication; prone positioning; ECMO (extracorporeal membrane oxygenation, which is a process outside the body to add oxygen and pump blood, allowing the heart to rest; and post-COVID-19 and post-ICU syndrome

[Sean Caples, D.O.](#), critical care specialist and pulmonologist

- Topics: Intensive care, including ventilator management, medication, prone positioning; ECMO; post-COVID-19 and post-ICU syndrome; teleICU use escalated in pandemic
- Dr. Caples audio example: "[Telehealth supporting New York ICU patients with COVID-19](#)"

[Pablo Moreno Franco, M.D.](#), critical care specialist

- Topics: Intensive care, including ventilator management, medication, prone positioning, ECMO; post-COVID-19 and post-ICU syndrome; effects of COVID-19 on the liver
- Also speaks Spanish
- Location: Jacksonville, Florida

Sadia Shah, M.D., critical care specialist, pulmonologist

- Topics: Effects of COVID-19 on lungs; lung recovery; and lung transplants as a treatment
- Location: Jacksonville, Florida

Carla Venegas-Borsellino, M.D., critical care specialist

- Topics: Ethnic disparities; intensive care
- Also speaks Spanish
- Location: Jacksonville

Emergency care

Brian Bartlett, M.D., emergency medicine specialist

- Topic: Emergency and general COVID-19 care
- Location: Fairmont and Mankato, Minnesota

Susan Cullinan, M.D., emergency medicine specialist

- Topics: Don't put off emergency care during pandemic; current pandemic situation in Northwest Wisconsin
- Location: Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Deepi Goyal, M.D., emergency medicine specialist, personal experience with COVID-19 infection

- Topic: Personal experience with COVID-19
- A Mayo physician for 21 years, Dr. Goyal contracted COVID-19 from a household contact. He and his family had a strict quarantine, but despite best efforts, he developed symptoms on day nine of a 10-day quarantine. Dr. Goyal speaks to the importance of [remote home monitoring](#) and how to stop virus spread. He advises that people should develop a quarantine plan before being infected.
- Dr. Goyal audio example: "[Battling COVID-19 personally](#)"

Paul Horvath, M.D., emergency medicine specialist

- Topic: Don't put off emergency care during pandemic; current pandemic situation in Northwest Wisconsin
- Location: Eau Claire, Wisconsin

Infectious diseases

Andrew Badley, M.D., infectious diseases specialist leading Mayo Clinic's COVID-19 Task Force

- Topics: COVID-19 therapeutics, including monoclonal antibody cocktail; inpatient treatment for COVID-19
- Dr. Badley video example: "[Vaccines amid the COVID-19 pandemic](#)"

Elie Berbari, M.D., infectious diseases specialist

- Topic: Minimizing exposure to COVID-19

- Dr. Barbari audio example: "[Unprecedented challenge of fighting COVID-19](#)"
- Also speaks Arabic, French and Spanish

[Ala Dababneh, M.D.](#), infectious diseases specialist

- Topics: Epidemiology; COVID-19 transmission; personal protective equipment (PPE); and masking
- Location: La Crosse, Wisconsin

[Jack O'Horo, M.D.](#), infectious diseases and critical care specialist

- Topics: Epidemiology; COVID-19 transmission; personal protective equipment; masking; community mitigation; prevention; effects on health care systems; treatment guidelines; treatments outside of clinical trials

[Nipunie Rajapakse, M.D.](#), pediatric infectious diseases specialist

- Topics: Pregnancy and COVID-19; how to help children stay safe at school and home
- Dr. Rajapakse video example: "[Women's Wellness: Pregnancy and COVID-19](#)"

[Raymund Razonable, M.D.](#), infectious diseases specialist

- Topics: Caring for hospitalized patients with COVID-19; therapeutics and treatments of COVID-19; Mayo's principal investigator for clinical trial of Regeneron's antibody study
- Dr. Razonable audio example: "[Managing COVID 19 inpatients](#)"
- Also speaks Filipino, an offshoot of Tagalog

[Stacey Rizza, M.D.](#), infectious diseases specialist

- Topics: COVID-19 transmission; treatment; vaccine development; and prevention
- Dr. Rizza video example: "[What people living with hepatitis C need to know about COVID-19](#)"

[Priya Sampathkumar, M.D.](#), infectious diseases and critical care specialist

- Topics: COVID-19 prevention; testing; treatment; and vaccines
- Dr. Sampathkumar video example: "[Vaccine recommendations and what parents need to know](#)"
- Twitter handle: @PSampathkumarMD

[Aditya Shah, M.B.B.S.](#), infectious diseases specialist

- Topics: COVID-19 Prevention; masking; safety; community awareness; and treatment guidelines

[Aaron Tande, M.D.](#), infectious diseases specialist

- Topic: Infectious diseases research; patient care
- Twitter handle: @MDTande

[Pritish Tosh, M.D.](#), infectious diseases specialist

- Topics: Health care emergency preparedness; surge trends; prevention; and contact tracing

- Dr. Tosh video example: "[Contact tracing may slow the spread of COVID-19](#)"

[Abinash Virk, M.D.](#), infectious diseases specialist

- Topics: Safe traveling during a pandemic; comprehensive [remote home monitoring](#) of patients with COVID-19
- Dr. Virk video example: "[What to do if you develop symptoms while traveling](#)"
- Twitter handle: @AbinashVirkMD

Laboratory testing

[Matthew Binnicker, Ph.D.](#), director of the Clinical Virology Laboratory at Mayo Clinic

- Topics: Types of tests; SARS-Co-V-2 test developed at Mayo; testing accuracy; and positivity rates
- Twitter handle: @DrMattBinnicker

[Erin Graf, Ph.D.](#), microbiologist

- Topics: Analytical testing; pathology
- Location: Phoenix, Arizona

[William Morice II, M.D., Ph.D.](#), president of Mayo Clinic Laboratories and chair of the Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology

- Topics: Types of tests; testing accuracy; positivity rates; testing data; false positives and negatives; screening; and surveillance testing
- Dr. Morice audio example: "[Answers From the Lab](#)"
- Twitter handle: @moricemdphd

[Bobbi Pritt, M.D.](#), pathologist and chair of the Division of Clinical Microbiology

- Topics: Types of tests; testing accuracy; cycle thresholds, indicating how much virus an infected person harbors; and research into at-home COVID-19 testing kits with related studies on influenza in [Mayo Clinic Proceedings](#) and [Journal of Clinical Microbiology](#).
- Dr. Pritt video example: "[Avoiding ticks](#)"
- Twitter handle: @ParasiteGal

[Elitza Theel, Ph.D.](#), director of Mayo Clinic's Infectious Disease Serology Laboratory

- Topic: COVID-19 serology testing to detect a patient's immune response to the virus
- Dr. Theel video example: "[Antibody testing for COVID-19](#)"
- Twitter handle: @ElliTheelPhD

Investigational therapies /other

[Rickey Carter, Ph.D.](#), specialist in biostatistics and medical informatics

- Topics: Statistical analysis of studies related to COVID-19; convalescent plasma
- Location: Jacksonville, Florida

James Cerhan, M.D., Ph.D., chair, Health Sciences Research at Mayo Clinic

- Topic: Longitudinal COVID-19 Biobank

DeLisa Fairweather, Ph.D., cardiovascular and immunology researcher

- Topics: Convalescent plasma; mechanisms of inflammation in the heart
- Dr. Fairweather video example: "[Capsaicin's connection to heart health](#)"
- Location: Jacksonville, Florida

Michael Joyner, M.D., anesthesiologist and physiologist

- Topics: Convalescent plasma; Expanded Access Program
- Dr. Joyner video example: "[Convalescent plasma associated with reduced COVID-19 mortality in 35,000-plus hospitalized patients](#)"
- Twitter handle: @DrMJoyner

Rahul Kashyap, M.B.B.S., Mayo researcher and principal investigator of the VIRUS COVID-19 Registry

- Topic: Long-term studies of COVID-19

Matthew Schellenberg, Ph.D., researcher, biochemistry and molecular biology

- Topics: SARS-CoV-2 discovery: cell and structural biology (imaging); how cells fix damage to DNA; DNA imaging; and determining the 3D structure of the SARS-CoV-2 protein ORF8 to determine what it does and how it contributes to the success of SARS-CoV-2 (it is a protein that has changed significantly between the original SARS and the current pandemic virus)

R. Scott Wright, M.D., cardiologist, clinical trial expert, head of Mayo's Institutional Review Board

- Topics: Convalescent plasma; Expanded Access Program; and COVID-19 clinical trials
- Dr. Wright video example: "[Convalescent plasma associated with reduced COVID-19 mortality in 35,000-plus hospitalized patients](#)"
- Twitter handle: @ScottWrightMD

Neurology

Marie Grill, M.D., neuroinfectious disease specialist

- Topics: Difficulty concentrating; muscle pain; headaches; dizziness; loss of taste and smell; impaired consciousness; postinfectious syndromes, such as encephalitis; and long-haul recovery
- Also speaks Spanish and French
- Location: Phoenix, Arizona

Joseph Sirven, M.D., neurologist

- Topic: COVID-19's effect on people with epilepsy, seizure disorders and dementia

- Dr. Sirven video example: "[COVID-19 tips for people with epilepsy and seizure disorders](#)"
- Also speaks Spanish; Dr. Sirven was chief medical contributor for NBC Latino
- Location: Jacksonville, Florida

[Alejandro Rabinstein, M.D.](#), neurointensivist

- Topics: Seizures; strokes; encephalopathy; severe generalized weakness; Guillain-Barre syndrome; and in-hospital neurological complications
- Also speaks Spanish

[Michel Toledano, M.D.](#), neuroinfectious diseases specialist

- Topics: Difficulty concentrating; muscle pain; headaches; dizziness; loss of taste and smell; impaired consciousness; postinfectious syndromes, such as encephalitis; and long-haul recovery
- Also speaks Spanish

Occupational medicine

[Melanie Swift, M.D., M.P.H.](#), occupational medicine specialist

- Topics: Vaccine rollout, vaccine research
- Dr. Swift video example: "[Are COVID-19 vaccines safe and effective?](#)"

[Greg Vanichkachorn, M.D.](#), occupational medicine specialist

- Topics: "Long-haulers" post-COVID-19 syndrome; Mayo's COVID-19 Activity Rehabilitation Program to help patients return to daily life and work
- Dr. Vanichkachorn video example: "[Rehabilitation after COVID-19](#)"

Racial and ethnic health disparities

[LaPrincess Brewer, M.D.](#), preventive cardiologist

- Topics: Health and health care disparities in racial and ethnic minorities; community; faith-based interventions to reduce cardiovascular disease, stroke and diabetes in the African American population; and FAITH (Fostering African-American Improvement in Total Health) program to provide Black communities with tools to reduce the effects of COVID-19
- Dr. Brewer video example: "[Diversity and heart health disparities](#)"

[Chyke Doubeni, M.B.B.S.](#), family medicine physician and director of the Mayo Clinic Center for Health Equity and Community Engagement Research

- Topics: Clinical and public health interventions, as well as primary care transformations to improve access to care and eliminate [health disparities in the burden of COVID-19](#) in diverse communities; [health equity thought leadership](#)
- Dr. Doubeni video example: "[COVID-19 Town Hall](#)" (starting at the 37-minute mark)

Irene Sia, M.D., infectious diseases specialist

- Topics: Immigrant and refugee health; disparities arising from biomedical factors and social determinants of health among Black, Native American and Latinx communities. Community-based participatory research studies include [Clinical Infectious Disease](#) on the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S.; and [Mayo Clinic Proceedings](#) on community engagement with vulnerable populations
- Dr. Sia audio example: "[Ethnic disparities and COVID-19](#)"

Mark Wieland, M.D., internal medicine physician

- Topics: How physicians can do a better job reaching Black, Hispanic and Native American communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19
- Dr. Wieland [teamed up with community leaders](#) to combat disparities. Studies include [Clinical Infectious Disease](#) and [Mayo Clinic Proceedings](#).
- Dr. Wieland audio example: "[Ethnic disparities and COVID-19](#)"

Richard O. White, M.D., internist and pediatrician

- Topics: COVID-19 prevention and treatment in adults and children; racial and ethnic disparities
- Dr. White video example: "[Research to address obesity in African American youth](#)"
- Also speaks Spanish
- Location: Jacksonville, Florida

Pediatric and Adolescent

Medicine

Nusheen Ameenuddin, M.D., M.P.H., pediatrician, chair of American Academy of Pediatrics council on communications and media

- Topics: community health and pediatrics, vaccine hesitancy
- Twitter handle: @nam4kids

Emily Levy, M.D., pediatric infectious disease and critical care physician

- Topics: pediatric infectious diseases, MIS-C
- Twitter handle: @EmilyLevyMD

Angela Mattke, M.D.,

pediatrician

- Topics: Screen time; challenges with schooling during pandemic; and importance of play
- Dr. Mattke video example: "[Get your COVID-19 questions answered](#)"
- Twitter handle: @DrAngelaMattke #AskTheMayoMom

Psychological effects

[Craig Sawchuk, Ph.D.](#), psychologist

- Topics: How to handle sense of grief, loss, fear and anxiety as pandemic continues and carefulness fatigue sets in; seasonal depression; rise of loneliness during pandemic; and COVID-19 shaming
- Dr. Sawchuk video example: "[Head back to school with 4 Be's for mental health](#)"

[Sheila Jowsey-Gregoire, M.D.](#), psychiatrist

- Topics: How to deal with anxiety and worry related to the COVID-19 pandemic; self-care strategies during quarantine
- She also works with transplant candidates, patients and recipients.
- Dr. Jowsey-Gregoire video example: [Binge-watching negative news](#)

[Tyler Oesterle, M.D.](#), psychiatrist

- Fear and anxiety as pandemic continues and fatigue sets in; seasonal depression in adults and children; and addiction and chemical dependency issues
- Location: Albert Lea, Minnesota

[Jeffrey Staab, M.D.](#), psychiatrist

- Topics: Maintain healthy habits to care for yourself and combat pandemic fatigue; break the silence if you notice trouble in yourself or others by seeking help

[Stephen Whiteside, Ph.D.](#), pediatric psychologist

- Topic: Anxiety disorders and children during a pandemic

Rehabilitation

[Carmen Terzic, M.D., Ph.D.](#), physiatrist

- Topic: How to help people with disabilities stay safe and healthy
- Also speaks Spanish and French

Sports medicine

[Chad Asplund, M.D.](#), sports medicine specialist

- Topics: Adjusting training and conditioning safely during the pandemic; return-to-play protocols; and effects of COVID-19 on players and sports
- Dr. Asplund is on the NCAA's COVID-19 Medical Advisory Group and recently completed a stint as chief medical officer in the NBA bubble.
- Location: Minneapolis and Rochester, Minnesota

[David Soma, M.D.](#), pediatric sports medicine specialist

- Topics: Mental and physical benefits of youth sports; recommendations for screening athletes for COVID-19
- Dr. Soma video example: "[Youth sports safety during a pandemic](#)"

Vaccine development and delivery

[Michael A. Barry, Ph.D.](#), director, Mayo Clinic's Vector and Vaccine Engineering Laboratory

- Topics: Vaccine development and research

[Robert Jacobson, M.D.](#), pediatrician and vaccine researcher

- Topics: [Vaccine explainer](#), including approval process, demand and distribution; connecting history to the COVID-19 pandemic; herd immunity
- Dr. Jacobson video example: "[What to do if your child has croup](#)"

[Richard Kennedy, Ph.D.](#), co-director of the [Mayo Clinic Vaccine Research Group](#)

- Topic: Development of immune response after vaccination
- Also speaks Italian

[Gregory Poland, M.D.](#), infectious disease specialist and director of the [Mayo Clinic Vaccine Group](#)

- Topics: Vaccines; treatments such as antivirals; diagnostics; spread; masks; hand-washing; physical distancing; and parallels between the response to 1918 pandemic, bubonic plague in the 15th and 16th centuries and COVID-19 today
- Dr. Poland video example: "[Why getting vaccinated for flu is doubly important this season](#)"