

# P-POD 2020 PANDEMIC-ERA SAFETY-SUPPORTING EFFORTS AND STANDARDS

from the Board of Directors (<https://preventionofdisease.org/about-us>), Plant-based Prevention Of Disease ([www.p-pod.org](http://www.p-pod.org))



We appreciate the great privilege involved in being able to attend live in-person educational events during normal life in our society, but they have disappeared during the past

month. We are all focused during this pandemic upon the catastrophic medical and economic suffering of many, and upon the remarkable service, sacrifice and risk taken on by those such as health care workers who commonly have not been provided with sufficient resources or protective materials that they desperately need.

We trust that passage through the acute phase of the COVID-19 crisis will lead to some tapering off of social distancing directives when authoritative science-based public health guidance most clearly supports that. We presume that live in-person educational events will eventually start to reappear in the U.S. P-POD might emerge on **July 24-26, 2020** as one of the first, and it would then not just be “business as usual” for our nonprofit. We always want to be a voice for advancing the frontiers of people-centered health care. We likewise wish to take pro-active leadership and to set an example for others, in suggesting how our event, in re-opening, can sensibly promote the safety of our participants. Given the ferocious contagion rate of the novel coronavirus, no one can guarantee zero probability of exposure in any societal activities, but we intend a diligent comprehensive set of precautions.

The following is our statement-in-progress, being expanded and updated, of P-POD 2020 Safety-Supporting Efforts and Standards:

**(1)** If any P-POD registrant, speaker, board or staff member, or volunteer, before arriving at the conference, experiences any upper respiratory disturbances, fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste/smell or flu-like symptoms, then we require that person NOT to travel to the conference site, but rather to seek medical assistance or evaluation. Similarly, for any person known to have had close contact within the past 14 days with someone infected with the coronavirus, we require not traveling to the conference site unless currently recognized testing procedures conclude there is no danger that an incubation period may be in progress. As we have stated, any cancellation of registration due to individual health issues will result in a full refund of payments we received, unless the registrant chooses to apply them toward future events.

**(2)** We are exploring the logistics and technical validity of our screening all participants upon initial P-POD arrival, so that anyone showing elevated temperature may be sent for immediate medical assistance or evaluation as opposed to being admitted.

**(3)** If any participant experiences on-site any upper respiratory disturbances, fever, cough, shortness of breath, loss of taste/smell or flu-like symptoms, then the person should depart from the current activity to seek immediate medical assistance or evaluation.

**(4)** Our Student Center ballroom has an enormous capacity when attendees are seated shoulder-to-shoulder in rows. It can also be set up with round tables seating 8 persons each. We are choosing to LIMIT CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE and to spread out. We will fill the room using those round tables with only 3 seats each, rather than 8. Thus we are restricting participation so that we occupy only 20% of the room’s capacity.

**(5)** We expect all participants to observe on-site the universally recognized measures that can reduce transmission of viral infections, now of special importance due to high contagion rates of novel coronavirus: frequent thorough hand-washing with soap; avoidance of touching surfaces most likely to transfer viral contamination; not shaking hands; minimizing the touching of one’s own face; use of high-alcohol sanitizing substances in clean-up situations where thorough hand-washing is impossible; leaving interpersonal settings when coughing or sneezing is likely, and seeking care for conditions noted in part (3) above.

**(6)** There will be no sharing of microphones, and we will ensure the trading out of used microphones (or of complete protective microphone covers) for unused or thoroughly sanitized ones between uses by different people. This will apply to speakers and also to attendees who would be coming forward to ask questions at the end of each presentation.

**(7)** As the conference approaches, we will monitor all directives from appropriate public health authorities regarding whether it seems important for participants to wear non-medical face masks some or much of the time, and regarding what specific “distancing” guidance should be implemented by us in different situations throughout the conference.

HOWEVER, our annual Saturday night dance will be a masked dance without physical contact. You won’t need a costume, just a face mask. We can celebrate Carnival in July! We won’t unmask at midnight because we’ll all be asleep well before then.

**(8)** We will be coordinating closely with our university host to ensure there are always help-lines / points-of-contact available for any health-related needs of participants, and that any necessary basic medical supplies and sanitation resources are readily and plentifully on hand. The university urgent care facility is 1,900 feet from the ballroom, and the city hospital is 2.7 miles away.