



Patient Safety

Campus construction information



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Massachusetts General Hospital
Founding Member, Mass General Brigham



Over the next several years, multiple buildings on the Mass General campus will be dismantled and construction will occur to create a new inpatient building.

Are there risks associated with construction?

There is the possibility that construction activities could increase levels of dirt and dust in the air. This could lead to higher-than-normal levels of mold spores in the air near the construction site.

Why would mold spores pose a problem?

Molds are naturally present in the outside environment and usually do not cause infections in healthy individuals with normal immune systems. In individuals with weakened immune systems, however, molds can cause serious infections.

Who could be at risk from mold spores?

Examples of patients with weakened immune systems include:

- Stem cell or bone marrow transplant patients
- Lung transplant patients and other organ transplant patients at times
- Patients with a low white blood cell count (neutropenia)

Are there steps I should take to protect myself when coming to the Mass General main campus?

First, patients should speak with their health care provider about their immune status and determine whether they are at increased risk for infections from molds. If the health care provider indicates that the patient may be at an increased risk, patients should follow the provider's specific instructions for protective measures, which may include:

- Avoiding walking around the perimeter of the construction site when possible
- Wearing a protective mask when walking outside near the construction site. The type of mask patients should wear will be determined by his or her health care provider. There are two types of masks a health care provider could recommend: a facemask or an N95 respirator.

What steps are being taken to decrease dust in the hospital buildings during construction?

Air intake and air handling units will be protected from dirt and dust by filters. Filters also will be monitored and changed more frequently as needed. In addition, air quality will be monitored regularly during the construction project.

What steps are being taken to decrease outside levels of dust during construction?

Several techniques will be used to reduce and control dust levels during the demolition of the buildings and construction of the new building, including using water misting at the site, washing truck wheels and street cleaning. Demolition will take place during the cooler months when mold spore counts are lower.

For more information, speak with your health care provider or contact the Infection Control Unit at (617) 726-2036.