

A detailed 3D rendering of a large COVID-19 virus particle in the foreground, with several smaller particles visible in the background. The particles are dark grey with a textured surface and numerous red, spike-like protrusions. The background is a dark blue gradient.

Your COVID-19 Update

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Our message to you

As COVID-19 continues to reshape our lives – how we interact with others, how we work, how we self-distance ourselves from the people we love – our commitment is to keep you informed and included in the work we're doing on your behalf to fight COVID-19.

We truly have some incredible scientists based in WA. And, here at the Perkins, everyone is stepping up to help during this crisis.

We are focusing our efforts on providing rapid, practical solutions that only a medical research institute like ours can provide. We are collaborating with our research colleagues in WA and other institutes across Australia and around the world.

And we're working with industry & foundations to provide expert advice and support to the community where we live and work.

This publication will provide you with a snapshot of what we are doing to fight COVID-19.

More than ever, we will face this together, because that's what family does, and you are part of the Perkins family.

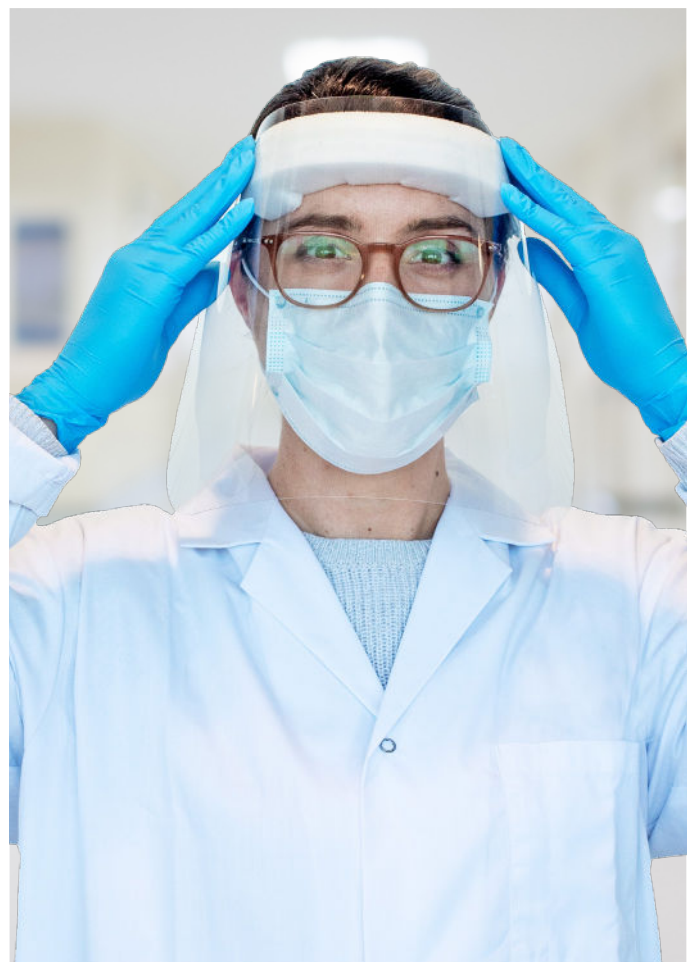
Face shields groundswell

Many of you responded to our Emergency Face Shield appeal. And for that, we are very grateful.

Perkins biomedical engineers collaborating with other researchers in facilities around Perth put their skills together to create a locally produced face shield to help protect healthcare workers from COVID-19.

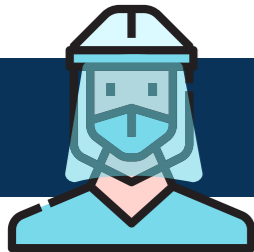
The biomedical engineers are a wonderful addition to the Perkins. They bring a unique set of skills that is focused on creating devices and models to address medical research conundrums. So they were perfectly placed to respond to the challenge of creating a face shield for our frontline health workers and other medical professionals.

With your help, 6,500 face shields have been funded. Thank you so much for your support of this important initiative.



Perkins takes the fight to COVID-19

As medical researchers, we are in a powerful position to work alongside our brave frontline healthcare professionals to offer support, innovation and resources. Here's what we are doing so far:



Protection

Perkins Biomedical Engineers are assisting in the production of face shields right here in WA to protect frontline healthcare professionals AND their patients.

Virus Intel

We're providing infrastructure at our Perkins South building and research support for a COVID-19 tissue and data bank so we can know more about the virus to fight it.



Helping our Hospitals

We've gifted Fiona Stanley Hospital space at the Perkins South Building to move their non COVID-19 outpatients for their own protection and to provide more room for critical patients.

Facing this together

Our COVID-19 projects are in service to you, your families and the WA community. They're only made possible by your kindness. As a charity, we rely on grants and donations to survive. Your generosity strengthens our capability to save lives during this pandemic. Your continued support is incredibly important to us. Thank you. Let's face COVID-19 together.



Supporting Testing

We're working on a research program that may result in more extensive COVID-19 testing.

Frontline Support

Our researchers and clinicians are offering their services to hospitals and diagnostic labs to ease the burden on existing staff.



Vaccine Trials

We're aiming to test a COVID-19 vaccine in our clinical trials facility, Linear in the near future.

Essential Clinical Trials

We're aiming to maintain our cancer clinical trials in Linear during the COVID-19 pandemic so we can continue to provide our cancer patients with potentially lifesaving drugs.



COVID-19 Mythbusters

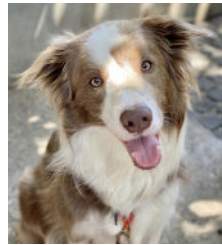
There's a lot of information out there about the new coronavirus and it can be hard to distinguish the fact from the fishy. To help, we're busting some common myths about COVID-19 before they spread.

Remember that the best way to protect yourself against COVID-19 is with frequent hand washing and the best way to protect yourself against misinformation is with trustworthy sources.



Myth 1 Soap isn't as good as sanitiser

Studies have shown that good old-fashioned soap and warm water is the most powerful method of destroying germs and viruses – including COVID-19. Hand sanitisers that are over 60% alcohol-based can dissolve the virus so it is neutralised but still leaves the virus particles on your hands.



Myth 2 Pets are contagious

While it has been established that pets cannot contract COVID-19, there is also no current evidence to suggest that your pet can spread the virus. However, it's always a good idea to wash your hands after touching your pet.



Myth 3 Masks are a must

The World Health Organisation (WHO) recommend that you only wear a mask if you're coughing or sneezing frequently or caring for someone that may have contracted COVID-19. If there is not heavy outbreak of the virus in your community and you're otherwise healthy, you don't need to wear a mask.



Myth 4 Warm drinks can kill the virus

Heat can decontaminate surfaces from COVID-19, but unfortunately this approach doesn't work on humans. Drinking warm drinks will not reduce your chance of contracting the virus, or help you to get rid of it quicker – that being said, it's always a good idea to stay hydrated and drink plenty of water.

Your donations are driving discoveries

With COVID-19 dominating the news recently, you might have missed some of the amazing breakthroughs that have happened in the past few months.

We know that this virus is particularly dangerous to those who are in cancer treatment, have heart disease or who are immunocompromised. That is why your generous support is more important than ever before.

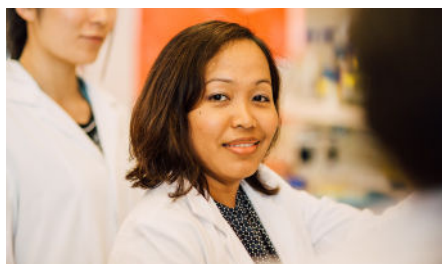
Our research to help those living with these diseases doesn't stop, in fact it makes us more determined to protect you and your loved ones. Here's a summary of recent work.



Drug to stop your cancer spreading

A Perkins research team has discovered a new use for a powerful anti-cancer drug they invented in 2017. The drug was shown to stop blood vessels from forming a treatment resistant barrier around some cancers, and now the research team, led by Professor Ruth Ganss, has found that the drug can be used to prevent cancer from spreading.

The drug works by stopping blood vessels from becoming 'leaky' and allowing cancer cells which move around your body to get established in a secondary organ. Most patients die from metastatic cancers, not the primary tumour, so this discovery has significant potential to save lives in the future.



Melting cancer's tough barrier

Some cancers are like a wound and a way that your body tries to repair a wound is to grow scar tissue around the tumour. Unfortunately, the scar tissue can function like a protective barrier, making it difficult for our body's immune cells and anti-cancer treatments to penetrate the tumour and effectively kill cancer cells.

Perkins cancer researcher, Dr Juliana Hamzah, has developed a groundbreaking drug that can digest this scar tissue, making your cancer more susceptible to treatment and immune cells. Importantly, the treatment is non-toxic and does not affect surrounding healthy tissue. Your donations fund Juliana's pioneering work.



Waking up your immune cells

With the overwhelming support of the hundreds of women (and a growing group of men) who give to women's cancer by walking in the Hawaiian Walk for Women's Cancer, Wesfarmers Fellow, Professor Pilar Blancafort is working on reactivating sleeping immune cells to fight hard-to-treat breast cancers.

Unfortunately, your immune system, which is programmed to eradicate cancer, can be switched off by signals released from cancerous tissue. Professor Blancafort is working to find new ways to reactivate your immune cells to effectively kill cancer.

This work is especially relevant for cancers that have spread because your immune system fails to recognise tumour cells circulating in your body. By using gene-editing technology, your tumour will be unable to switch your immune cells back off. Talk about taking the fight to the source.