

Wind Instruments and COVID-19: Facts and Info

Systematic Risk Reduction

- Indoor instrument playing:
 - Rooms are of sufficient size to space students at 6 foot interval
- Ventilation/Air refresh rate
 - Windows in classrooms
 - HS Auditorium refreshes the entire air volume every 20 minutes (HVAC system replaces entire air volume to mitigate CO2 buildup)
- Individual Protective Measures
 - The use of bell covers and musician's masks will be required for all wind players
- Distance between people is the greatest protection
- Mouth/Nose protection

Transmission Risks

- Main risk is in Droplet and Aerosol transmission
 - Droplets are larger than 5 microns in diameter
 - Aerosols are particles suspended in the air and are less than 5 microns
 - Droplets fall to the ground in no more than 3.5 feet
 - Aerosols tend to rise and follow air movement out of the room
 - Less risk due to small size of particles

Summary of Multiple Study Findings

- There was no significant additional air movement around any wind instrument
- There was slight air movement at 6 inches, and no measurable movement at 6 feet
- No droplet transmission extended past 3.5 feet
- With the exception of the flute, wind and brass instruments do not create significant air movement or aerosol production due to the seal of the embouchure around or against the mouthpiece. Studies have shown that flutes do create air movement, but not beyond 29.5 inches (so the 6 foot radius is a safe buffer zone).
- Condensation from brass instruments does not contain a significant viral load. What little load there may be can be mitigated by students draining the condensation onto an absorbent blotting paper (paper towel) and disposing of it by the students on their way out of the rehearsal.

Implementation at Mt. Tabor Summer Music Camp

- Our facilities and class sizes give us the ability to allow in-person playing during music classes, as we can meet or exceed all the protocols recommended by the various studies
 - We can meet or exceed the 6 foot interval
 - All wind players will wear musician's masks and use bell covers when playing indoors
 - There will be no sharing of any instruments beyond percussion and keyboards, which will be wiped down between classes
 - Percussion students must have their own mallets and sticks

Here are links to the most recent scientific studies that are examining whether or not there is a greater risk of COVID transmission for musicians and singers. The consensus among the studies is that there is no increase in risk, providing that the participants adhere to a social distancing protocol.

Bamburg, Germany:

<https://www.mh-freiburg.de/fileadmin/Downloads/Allgemeines/RisikoabschaetzungCoronaMusikSpahnRichter17.7.2020Englisch.pdf>

Science Magazine:

<https://www.sciencemag.org/news/2020/07/it-safe-strike-band-time-coronavirus>

University of Iowa Study:

<https://medicine.uiowa.edu/iowaprotocols/wind-instrument-aerosol-covid-era-covid-19-and-horns-trumpets-trombones-euphoniums-tubas-recorders>

Public Health, Ontario Canada:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/covid-wwksf/2020/07/what-we-know-transmission-risks-singing-wind-instruments.pdf?la=en>

Article in Medium.com:

<https://medium.com/@SixtoFMontesinos/wind-instruments-may-not-be-as-contagious-as-we-thought-b821e590b29a>