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For immediate release

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MPT’s *Direct Connection* looks at ways to stay safe during COVID-19 spike

*One-hour special airs Monday, December 14*

**OWINGS MILLS, MD** – Maryland Public Television’s (MPT) weekly public affairs program *Direct Connection* will present *Staying Safe During COVID-19*, a one-hour special on Monday, December 14 at 7 p.m. The program will address the recent local and national spikes in COVID-19 infections, including ways viewers can reduce risk and stay safe.

In addition to airing on MPT-HD, the program will livestream at [mpt.org/programs/direct-connection-stream/](http://mpt.org/programs/direct-connection-stream/).

*Direct Connection* host Jeff Salkin together with reporters Charles Robinson, Sue Kopen, and Nancy Yamada will explore a wide range of important and timely topics, among them:

- **Vaccines**: How do the new vaccines work, what encouragement should people take from recent news reports on the success of clinical trials, and when do the experts say they’ll be available?
- **Testing**: How does someone find a testing site, what is it like to get a test, how does a person obtain results, and what to do if the test result is positive?
- **COVID-19 fatigue**: Nearly everyone is experiencing COVID-19 fatigue after months of pandemic adaptation. What is it, what are its signs, and what are its psychological impacts on society and individuals, as well as on frontline medical professionals and first responders? Does pandemic fatigue heighten societal infection rate and risk?
- **Personal behavior**: What are the riskiest behaviors in the era of the pandemic and what are considered the safest behaviors?
- **Health disparities**: Why are some minorities more prone to infection, complications, and death? The segment will look at how affected minorities can identify personal risk and what to do to reduce the risk of transmission.
- **Getting answers to questions**: Where can viewers turn to if they have questions about their health and safety?
The Direct Connection website will package information from the Staying Safe During COVID-19 special and offer a collection of safety tips addressing on how to reduce risk.

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About Maryland Public Television
Maryland Public Television (MPT) is a statewide, public-supported TV network and Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) affiliate, offering entertaining, informative, educational, and inspiring content delivered by traditional broadcasting and streaming on TVs, computers, and mobile devices. A state agency, it operates under the auspices of the Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission. MPT creates and distributes local, regional, and national content and is a frequent winner of regional Emmy® Awards. MPT’s commitment to educators, parents, caregivers, and learners of all ages is delivered through instructional events and Thinkport.org. MPT’s year-round community engagement activities connect viewers with resources on a wide range of topics. For more information visit mpt.org.