# Practicing Proper Zoom Hygiene
Tips from Sheldon Benjamin, MD

We have all learned how to properly scrub our hands and practice social distancing.  But what about Zoom hygiene?  Zoom is an amazing tool, about the simplest to use video conferencing software one could imagine. But with ease of use there are always at least some security compromises.  Here's what you need to know:

If you are using Zoom via a med school license, then you are in a HIPAA compliant environment and can host video conferences for up to 300 participants without time limits. (The free version has a limit of 40 minutes if 3 or more people are on the conference).

- Pay attention to the settings when scheduling your meeting.

- Using your dedicated personal zoom meeting ID (as opposed to a unique meeting ID) can lead to problems without proper setup.

    If you have your own video set to start when the meeting starts, then participants may be able to see whatever is in front of your camera.  If you have it set to start your microphone automatically when a meeting starts you could set yourself up for some embarrassing overheard conversations, especially these days when we are working from home without childcare.

    If you are using your personal ID for confidential discussions (e.g. with patients) then do not set the software to automatically allow participants to enter the meeting when they connect.  Instead use the waiting room function.

    Once people know your personal meeting ID they can join your meetings any time (unless you have configured your settings to protect yourself as below).

- So, here are some simple suggestions for proper Zoom hygiene:
    1. Avoid using your dedicated personal meeting ID.  Instead have the system establish a new ID for each scheduled meeting.
    2. Set your preferences so that your video camera is turned off by default at the start of meetings.
    3. Set your preferences so that your microphone is muted until you unmute at the beginning of a conference.
    4. Have participants put in the "waiting room" until you admit them to the video conference.
    5. If you want a higher level of security for a meeting, set a meeting password.
    6. If you don't recognize a phone number on a meeting, ask the person their name.
    7. If you are recording a meeting inform the participants.