

## COVID-19 Update

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COVID-19 spreads by an infected person coughing and/or sneezing, thus producing infected respiratory droplets. Person-to-person spread occurs most often by touching surfaces where infected droplets have settled and then touching your eyes, nose, and/or face and mouth. There could be airborne spread if you are standing close to a person who is coughing. Unfortunately, some people can be infected and have little or no symptoms yet still be able to spread COVID-19 to others.

**1. Symptoms** – The virus could be carried for 2 days or up to 2 weeks before you notice symptoms.

- There could be sneezing, runny nose, fatigue, sore throat, exacerbated asthma, breathlessness, potential loss of taste or smell, having a cough that gets more severe over time, a low-grade fever that gradually increases in temperature.
- It may take 2–14 days for a person to notice symptoms after infection.

**2. Sanitize** - Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Hum the complete “Happy Birthday” song to be sure you’ve washed thoroughly. If you don’t have access to soap and water, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces. Clean phones, doorknobs, light switches, faucets, keyboards, and countertops. To prevent the spread of disease, it’s important to both clean and disinfect hard surfaces in your home, which means doing more than the usual wipe-down. First, clean surfaces with a rag and a mixture of detergent or soap and water. This will remove impurities, dirt and germs from the area, then disinfect the surface with an EPA registered disinfectant. **Do NOT** buy stuff that is “anti-bacterial” – coronavirus is a virus, not bacteria. Anti-bacterial stuff won’t do anything to prevent the spread of coronavirus.

**3. Social distancing** – *No gatherings of more than 10 people.* **Maintain at least a 6-foot distance from others, even while wearing a mask.** Self-isolation is the best preventative method for not catching the virus. If you need to go out for food, medication or to assist others, wear a mask.

**4. Avoid touching your face** - The face with its numerous mucus orifices, mainly the mouth, nose and eyes, is the ideal location for any pathogen to enter the body. That is why people should avoid touching their face altogether with unwashed hands. Cover your cough in your elbow, not your hand, if you don’t have a tissue. Cough or sneeze into your elbow or use a tissue, then dispose of the tissue immediately and clean your hands.

**3. Avoid touching transient items** - Things like handrails, elevator dials, doorknobs, latches, ramps, cash and so forth are items that many individuals touch during any given day. These transient items are usually a hotbed of infection, so avoiding touching as many of those with bare hands is also a good precaution. This means opening doors with covered elbows and pressing elevator buttons with a sleeve are good ideas.

**4. Mask** - *The government **recommends** that all people wear cloth face masks in public places. This will help slow the spread of the virus from asymptomatic people or people who do not know they have contracted the virus. Cloth face masks should be worn while continuing to practice social distancing.*

**5. Medical gloves** – There is no official policy that has come out yet. But if you are wearing medical gloves and are out and about, you should minimize your exposure to the virus by not touching possible contaminated surfaces.

**6. Supplies** - Have enough food and supplies on hand. (More than two weeks, possibly up to two month's worth.) Many restaurants and stores now have delivery service where you do not have to leave your house. Ordering from the Internet is another good way to receive goods. **Make sure you have a good supply of prescription medication, e.g., at least 4 weeks' worth.**

**7. Psychological** – Communicate with those whom you are close to. Remember, our communications still work; even more so, the video conferencing apps like Zoom have been taking off.

**8. Boosting Immunity** - Finally, the most important long-term thing anyone should do in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic is to take care of their body, being that it will be the one ultimately fighting the virus if they get infected. This means boosting the immune system and making sure it is in good condition. To get there, anyone should employ the well-known elements: eat a balanced diet of proteins, fats, vegetables, and carbohydrates with some additional vitamins like C and D; get plenty of rest; and engage in moderate exercise. These simple elements add up and boost a person's immunity to be able to take on any pathogen, including the new coronavirus strain.

#### **9. COVID – 19 scams to watch out for –**

- **Testing scams:** Scammers selling fake at-home test kits or going door-to-door performing fake tests for money.
- **Treatment scams:** Scammers offering to sell fake cures, vaccines, and advice on unproven treatments for COVID-19.
- **Supply scams:** Scammers are creating fake shops, websites, social media accounts, and email addresses claiming to sell medical supplies currently in high demand, such as surgical masks. Deal with a reputable company. Remember, if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is, check it out first.
- **Provider scams:** Scammers are contacting people by phone and email, pretending to be doctors and hospitals that have treated a friend or relative for COVID-19, and demanding payment for that treatment.
- **Charity scams:** Scammers are soliciting donations for individuals, groups, and areas affected by COVID-19.
- **Phishing scams:** Scammers posing as national and global health authorities, including the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), are sending phishing emails designed to trick recipients into downloading malware or providing personal identifying and financial information.

- **App scams:** Scammers are creating and manipulating mobile apps designed to track the spread of COVID-19 to insert malware that will compromise users' devices and personal information.
- **Investment scams:** Scammers are offering online promotions on various platforms, including social media, claiming that the products or services of publicly traded companies can prevent, detect, or cure COVID-19, and that the stock of these companies will dramatically increase in value as a result.