COVID-19

SAFETY INFORMATION

BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE

AND THE

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

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All information other than the Local Resources found on page 1 has been provided by the CDC and the Illinois Department of Public Health and can be found on their websites

https://www.cdc.gov/

and

https://www.dph.illinois.gov/

LOCAL RESOURCES

TESTING SITES

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, please contact one of the following local testing sites:

Shawnee Health Services

SHS is currently testing high-risk members of the community who are experiencing symptoms. Call 618-519-9200.

Southern Illinois Healthcare

SIH has set up a hotline to screen those who are experiencing symptoms or believe they may have been exposed to COVID-19. Call 844-988-7800.

SIU Center for Family Medicine

The SIU Center for Family Medicine has a testing site located in Carbondale at 300 West Oak Street, open Monday—Friday from 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. No appointment is necessary. Call 618-536-6621 for more information.

A more complete list of testing sites can be found at

https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/testing-sites

MORE INFORMATION

The following sites have updated information about the COVID-19 pandemic as it develops:

Jackson County Health Department https://www.jchdonline.org/

State of Illinois https://coronavirus.illinois.gov/s/

Illinois Department of Public Health https://www.dph.illinois.gov/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention https://www.cdc.gov/

Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Your symptoms can include the following:

If you have COVID-19, you may have mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.

Symptoms can appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Seek medical attention immediately if you or someone you love has **emergency warning signs**, including:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or not able to be woken
- Bluish lips or face

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

cdc.gov/coronavirus

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GUIDANCE ON

INTERPRETING COVID-19 TEST RESULTS

	RESULT	INTERPRETATION	RECOMMENDED ACTION
VIRAL TESTING† (testing for current infection)	**Positive**	*Most likely** you DO currently have an active COVID-19 infection and can give the virus to others.	Stay home* and follow CDC guidance on steps to take if you are sick. *If you are a healthcare or critical infrastructure worker, notify your work of your test result.
	Negative	*Most likely** you DO NOT currently have an active COVID-19 infection.	If you have symptoms, you should keep monitoring symptoms and seek medical advice about staying home and if you need to get tested again. If you don't have symptoms, you should get tested again only if your medical provider and/or workplace tells you to. Take steps to protect yourself and others.
ANTIBODY TESTING‡ (testing for past infection with the virus)	**Positive**‡	You *likely** have HAD a COVID-19 infection.	You may be protected from re-infection (have immunity), but this cannot be said with certainty. Scientists are conducting studies now to provide more information. Take steps to protect yourself and others.
	Negative	You *likely** NEVER HAD (or have not yet developed antibodies to) COVID-19 infection.	You could still get COVID-19. Take steps to protect yourself and others.
BOTH (antibody and viral testing)	Viral **Positive,** Antibody **Positive**‡	*Most likely** you DO currently have an active COVID-19 infection and can give the virus to others.	Stay home* and follow CDC guidance on steps to take if you are sick. *If you are a healthcare or critical infrastructure worker, notify your work of your test result.
	Viral **Positive,** Antibody **Negative**	*Most likely** you DO currently have an active COVID-19 infection and can give the virus to others.	Stay home* and follow CDC guidance on steps to take if you are sick. *If you are a healthcare or critical infrastructure worker, notify your work of your test result.
	Viral **Negative,** Antibody **Positive**	You *likely** have HAD and RECOVERED FROM a COVID-19 infection.	You may be protected from re-infection (have immunity), but this cannot be said with certainty. Scientists are conducting studies now to provide more information. You should get tested again only if your medical provider and/or workplace tells you to. Take steps to protect yourself and others.
	Viral **Negative,** Antibody **Negative**	You *likely** have NEVER HAD a COVID-19 infection.	You could still get COVID-19. You should get tested again only if your medical provider and/or workplace tells you to. Take steps to protect yourself and others.

*No test is ever perfect. All tests occasionally result in false positive results (the test result should be negative because you DO NOT have COVID-19 but comes back positive) or false negative results (the test result should be positive because you DO have COVID-19, but comes back negative). Sometimes the results are not definitive (the result is unclear, and you don't know if it is positive or negative). For this and other reasons, results should always be reviewed by a healthcare professional.

† Viral tests are typically performed on respiratory specimens such as nasal swabs or throat swabs. They test for the presence of the virus, usually by testing for the virus's RNA or sometimes by testing for the virus's proteins ("antigen testing"). Antigen testing may be less sensitive than tests for the virus's RNA. If your antigen test is negative, please ask your healthcare provider if additional testing with an RNA test is needed and how long you should stay home.

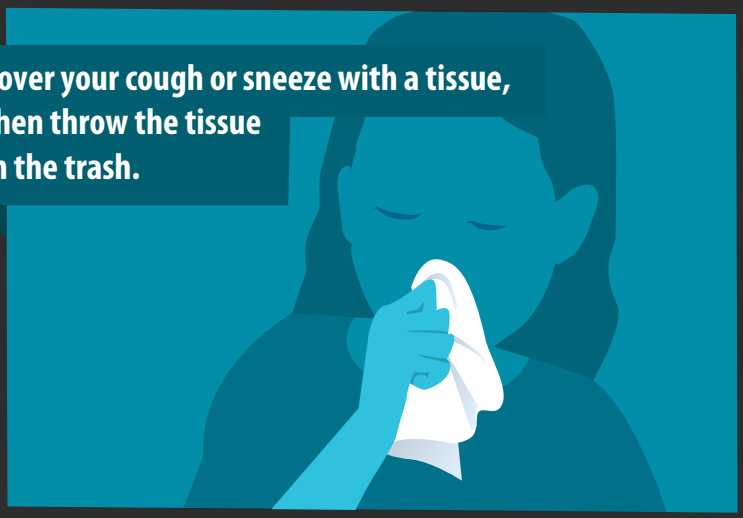
‡ Antibody testing, also called "serologic testing" or "serology", is typically performed on a blood sample. Ideally, the results show whether you have ever been infected with the virus in the past or may be currently infected. Antibody tests check for antibodies that appear in the blood between about one and three weeks after symptom onset and may remain as long as a lifetime. Antibody tests may be positive while a person is infected. It is not yet known whether these antibodies protect against reinfection with the COVID-19 virus. For many other similar viruses, antibodies are protective for years or longer, but we do not yet have adequate data to know for COVID-19.

Stop the Spread of Germs

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

When in public, wear a cloth face covering over your nose and mouth.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

cdc.gov/coronavirus

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Running Essential Errands

Grocery Shopping, Take-Out, Banking, Getting Gas, and Doctor Visits

As communities across the United States take steps to slow the spread of COVID-19 by limiting close contact, people are facing new challenges and questions about how to meet basic household needs, such as buying groceries and medicine, and completing banking activities. The following information provides advice about how to meet these household needs in a safe and healthy manner.

Find additional information for people who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Shopping for food and other household essentials

Stay home if sick

- Avoid shopping if you are sick or have symptoms of COVID-19, which include a fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Order online or use curbside pickup

- Order food and other items online for home delivery or curbside pickup (if possible).
- Only visit the grocery store, or other stores selling household essentials, in person when you absolutely need to. This will limit your potential exposure to others and the virus that causes COVID-19.

Protect yourself while shopping

- Stay at least 6 feet away from others while shopping and in lines.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when you have to go out in public.
- When you do have to visit in person, go during hours when fewer people will be there (for example, early morning or late night).
- If you are at higher risk for severe illness, find out if the store has special hours for people at higher risk. If they do, try to shop during those hours. People at higher risk for severe illness include adults 65 or older and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions.
- Disinfect the shopping cart, use disinfecting wipes if available.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- If possible, use touchless payment (pay without touching money, a card, or a keypad). If you must handle money, a card, or use a keypad, use hand sanitizer right after paying.

Use hand sanitizer

- After leaving the store, use hand sanitizer.

At home

- When you get home, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Follow food safety guidelines: clean, separate, cook, chill. There is no evidence that food or food packaging play a significant role in spreading the virus in the United States.

Accepting deliveries and takeout orders

Limit in person contact if possible

- Pay online or on the phone when you order (if possible).
- Accept deliveries without in-person contact whenever possible. Ask for deliveries to be left in a safe spot outside your house (such as your front porch or lobby), with no person-to-person interaction. Otherwise, stay at least 6 feet away from the delivery person.

Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after accepting deliveries or collecting mail

- After receiving your delivery or bringing home your takeout food, wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- After collecting mail from a post office or home mailbox, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Banking

Bank online whenever possible

- If you must visit the bank, use the drive-through ATM if one is available. Clean the ATM keyboard with a disinfecting wipe, if available, before you use it.
- When you are done, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when you get home.
- FDIC: Receiving IRS Economic Impact Payments

Getting gasoline

Use disinfecting wipes on handles or buttons before you touch them

- Use disinfecting wipes on handles and buttons before you touch them (if available).
- After fueling, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds when you get home or somewhere with soap and water.

Going to the doctor or getting medicine

Talk to your doctor online, by phone, or e-mail

- Use telemedicine, if available, or communicate with your doctor or nurse by phone or e-mail.
- Talk to your doctor about rescheduling procedures that are not urgently needed.

If you must visit in-person, protect yourself and others

- If you think you have COVID-19, notify the doctor or healthcare provider before your visit and follow their instructions.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering when you have to go out in public.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others while inside and in lines.
- When paying, use touchless payment methods if possible. If you cannot use touchless payment, sanitize your hands after paying with card, cash, or check. Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when you get home.

Limit in-person visits to the pharmacy

- Plan to order and pick up all your prescriptions at the same time.
- If possible, call prescription orders in ahead of time. Use drive-thru windows, curbside services (wait in your car until the prescription is ready), mail-order, or other delivery services. Do the same for pet medicine.
- Check with your doctor and pharmacist to see if you can get a larger supply of your medicines so you do not have to visit the pharmacy as often.

If you or a member of your household has signs of COVID-19, call your doctor first, instead of going to the office or the emergency department.

Call 911 if you believe it is an emergency. See also: What to do if you are sick.

Page last reviewed: May 11, 2020

State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Public Health

COVID-19
HOUSEHOLD CHECKLIST

The Illinois Department of Public Health offers these guidelines to prepare your household for an outbreak of any infectious disease.

Please stay calm and prepare, seek out accurate information, and be kind, staying mindful of actions that could perpetuate any discrimination or stigma associated with COVID-19 or other infectious diseases.

For additional information, please visit dph.illinois.gov

PREVENTION

- ❑ Use personal prevention protection methods at all times, whether at home, work, school, community events, or elsewhere:
  - Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds; dry hands with a clean towel or air dry hands.
  - Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are unavailable.
  - Cover your mouth with a tissue or sleeve when sneezing or coughing.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Stay home when you are sick.
  - Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- ❑ Keep soap, hand sanitizer, and tissues on hand. Make them easily accessible at home and carry with you when possible.
- ❑ Keep household cleaning spray or wipes readily available. Always use according to label instructions.
- ❑ Clean “high-touch” surfaces daily. These include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
- ❑ Don’t share personal items such as water bottles.
- ❑ Keep informed of recommendations of public health officials at www.cdc.gov, dph.illinois.gov, and your local health department web site.

Note: The use of face masks by people who are not sick is not recommended to protect against respiratory diseases. Face masks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent spread of the disease and by health care workers and others taking care of someone in a close setting.

IDPH
Illinois Department of Public Health

Get all your COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) questions answered by the Illinois Department of Public Health.
Call 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov

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State of Illinois
Illinois Department of Public Health

COVID-19
HOUSEHOLD CHECKLIST

PLANNING

- ❑ Keep an adequate supply of water, food, and pet food in your home. If you take prescription drugs, contact your health care provider, pharmacist, or insurance provider about keeping an emergency supply at home.
- ❑ Talk to caregivers about backup plans in the event a primary caregiver becomes ill.
- ❑ Meet with immediate family, relatives, and friends to discuss possible needs in the event of an infectious disease outbreak.
- ❑ Talk with neighbors about planning. Join neighborhood information webpages or emails.
- ❑ Plan ways to care for people at higher risk, including the very young, older people, people with chronic diseases, and people with compromised immune systems.
- ❑ Identify community organizations that may be able to help if you need information, health care services, support, or other resources.
- ❑ Create an emergency contact list of family members, friends, neighbors, health care providers, teachers, employers, and others.
- ❑ Keep a working thermometer and respiratory medications, like decongestants, expectorants, and analgesics (ibuprofen, acetaminophen) on hand.
- ❑ Choose a room and a bathroom (if possible) in your home that could be used to separate family members who become sick.
- ❑ Learn about the preparedness plans of your children's childcare facilities, schools, and/or colleges.
- ❑ Plan for childcare should schools temporarily close.
- ❑ Ask about your employers' preparedness plans, including sick-leave policies and telework options.
- ❑ Be prepared to cancel or postpone your attendance at large events, such as sporting events, conferences, and worship services, and to stay away from crowds.
- ❑ Be prepared for cancellation or disruptions of public transportation services.
- ❑ Be prepared to cancel non-essential travel plans.
- ❑ Get a flu shot this season if you haven't already. It won't protect against COVID-19, but it can help protect against flu or lessen symptoms if you get it, lessening the strain on health care facilities.

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State of Illinois

COVID-19

Workplace Health and Safety Guidance for Employees and Staff of Businesses

May 4, 2020

Practice Social Distancing

Pursuant to Executive Order 2020-32 (Stay at Home Order), your employer must comply, to the greatest extent feasible, with **social distancing requirements**. This means that your employer should:

- Make sure that you can maintain **at least 6 feet of physical separation** between yourself and others around you, including your co-workers and customers.
- Mark with **signage or tape** 6-foot spacing for employees and customers to maintain appropriate distance from one another.
- **Provide face coverings** to employees, especially when it is not possible to maintain at least 6 feet of space between you and another person.
- Provide **handwashing stations** with soap, clean water, and single use paper towels and encourage frequent handwashing for 20 seconds or longer.
- **Provide hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol) & sanitizing products** for employees and customers.
- **Regularly clean** high-touch surfaces including doorknobs, light switches, shared equipment, toilet handles, sink faucets, and clock in/out areas.

Do Not Work if You Are Sick

You should not report to work if you are experiencing symptoms of Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), including fever (100.4° or above), cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, chest tightness, extreme fatigue, loss of sense of taste or smell, diarrhea, muscle aches, or headaches.

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, stay home and call your doctor.

Who You Can Contact if You Have Concerns About Social Distancing in Your Workplace

If you have concerns that your employer is not allowing for safe social distancing or that it is not maintaining a safe and sanitary work environment to minimize the risk of spread of COVID-19, please contact the Workplace Rights Bureau of the Illinois Attorney General's Office at 844-740-5076 or workplacerights@atg.state.il.us.

If you believe that two or more employees at your workplace have COVID-19, please notify your local public health department. A list of local health departments can be found here: http://www.idph.state.il.us/IDPHPrograms/v_LHDDirectory/Show-V-LHDDirectory-Public.aspx.

Pursuant to Section 25(b) of the Whistleblower Protection Act, 740 ILCS 174, businesses are prohibited from retaliating against an employee for disclosing information when the employee has reasonable cause to believe that the information discloses a violation of a state or federal law, rule, or regulation.

For more information about COVID-19, including ways to protect yourself and others, visit the Illinois Department of Public Health's COVID-19 website: https://www.dph.illinois.gov/covid19.

IDPH
Illinois Department of Public Health

Office of the Illinois Attorney General

Questions about COVID-19?
Call 1-800-889-3931 or email dph.sick@illinois.gov
Illinois Department of Public Health - www.dph.illinois.gov

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Living in Shared Housing

Shared or congregate housing includes apartments, condominiums, student or faculty housing, national and state park staff housing, transitional housing, and domestic violence and abuse shelters.

Shared housing residents often gather together closely for social, leisure, and recreational activities, shared dining, laundry facilities, stairwells, and elevators and may have challenges with social distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Protect yourself

- Social distance by staying at least 6 feet apart from others that you do not live with.
- Wear cloth face coverings in any shared spaces, not including your room.
- Seek out a "buddy" in the facility who will check on you and make sure your are getting basic necessities, including food and household essentials.
- Everyday preventative actions everyone should take.

People at-risk

- Keep up-to-date lists of medical conditions and medications, and periodically check to ensure you have a sufficient supply of your prescription and over-the-counter medications.
- Contact your healthcare provider to ask about getting extra necessary medications to have on hand for a longer period of time, or to consider using a mail-order option for medications.
- Be aware of serious symptoms of if you have underlying conditions, of COVID-19 symptoms, and know who to ask for help or when to call 911.
- Extra steps to take if you are at-risk.

Know where to get information

- Make sure you know how your facility is going to communicate COVID-19 information to you; email, websites, hotlines, automated text messaging, newsletters, and flyers to help communicate information on.

The facility

- COVID-19 prevention supplies should be provided in common areas, such as soap, alcohol-based hand sanitizers that contain at least 60% alcohol, tissues, trash baskets, and, if possible, cloth face coverings that are washed or discarded after each use.
- Non-essential volunteers and visitors in shared areas should be limited or avoided.
- Staff should avoid entering residents' rooms or living quarters unless it is necessary. Staff should use virtual communications and check ins (phone or video chat), as appropriate.

Common spaces

Be flexible, rules may change in common areas. Maintain 6 feet of social (physical) distance between yourself and everyone that you do not live with. This may mean there will be alternatives to activities, cancelled activities, or closed areas. If you see people in areas that are small, like stairwells and elevators, consider going one at a time. Here are some examples of how the rules in common spaces may change:

Shared kitchens, dining rooms, laundry rooms, bathrooms

- Access should be available, but the number of people should be restricted so that everyone can stay at least 6 feet apart from one another.
- People who are sick, their roommates, and those who have higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should eat or be fed in their room, if possible.
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, or eating utensils. Non-disposable food service items used should be handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.
- Guidelines for doing laundry such as washing instructions and handling of dirty laundry should be posted.
- Sinks could be an infection source and should avoid placing toothbrushes directly on counter surfaces. Totes can be used for personal items so they do not touch the bathroom countertop.

Recreational areas such as activity rooms, exercise rooms, pools, and hot tubs

- Consider closing or restricting the number of people allowed in at one time to ensure everyone can stay at least 6 feet apart, except for essential activities only, such as water therapy.

If a resident has or thinks they have COVID-19

Administrators

Residents are not required to notify administrators if they think they may or have a confirmed case of COVID-19. If administrators do receive information that someone in your facility has COVID-19, they should work with the local health department to notify anyone in the building who may have been exposed (had close contact with the sick person) while maintaining the confidentiality of the sick person as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and, if applicable, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

- If possible, designate a separate bathroom for residents with COVID-19 symptoms.
    - Consider reducing cleaning frequency in bedrooms and bathrooms dedicated to persons with COVID-19 symptoms to as-needed cleaning (e.g., soiled items and surfaces) to avoid unnecessary contact with the ill persons.
- Full guidance for administrator guidance

Sick person and close contacts

The sick person, their roommates, and close contacts need to self-isolate – limit their use of shared spaces as much as possible. They should:

- Wear a cloth face covering when it is necessary to be in shared spaces.
- Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- What to do if you are sick

Page last reviewed: April 27, 2020

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Households Living in Close Quarters

How to Protect Those That Are Most Vulnerable

This guidance is intended for people living together in close quarters, such as people who share a small apartment, or for people who live in the same household with large or extended families.

Older adults (65 and older) and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The following information is aimed to help you protect those who are most vulnerable in your household.

Everyone should limit risks

If your household includes one or more vulnerable individuals then **all family members should act as if they, themselves, are at higher risk.** More information on steps and actions to take if at higher risk.

Limit errands

Family members should leave only when absolutely necessary. Essential errands include going to the grocery store, pharmacy, or medical appointments that cannot be delayed (e.g., infants or individuals with serious health conditions in need of aid).
If you must leave the house, please do the following:

- Choose one or two family members who are not at a higher risk to run the essential errands.
- Wear a cloth face covering, avoid crowds, practice social distancing, and follow these recommended tips for running errands.
- Don't use public transportation, such as the train or bus, during this period if possible.
  If you must use public transportation:
  - Maintain a 6-foot distance from other passengers as much as possible.
  - Avoid touching high-touch surfaces such as handrails, and wash hands or use hand sanitizers as soon as possible after leaving.
- Don't ride in a car with members of different households. If that's not possible:
  - Limit close contact and create space between others in the vehicle.
  - Improve air flow in the car by opening the window or placing air conditioning on non-recirculation mode.
- Wash your hands immediately after you return home.
- Maintain as much physical distance as possible with those at higher risk in the home. For example, avoid hugging, kissing, or sharing food or drinks.

Vulnerable members should avoid caring for children

Adults 65 years and older and people who have serious medical conditions should avoid caring for the children in their household, if possible. If people at higher risk must care for the children in their household, **the children in their care should not have contact with individuals outside the household.**

Separate a household member who is sick

Provide a separate bedroom and bathroom for the person who is sick, if possible. If you cannot provide a separate room and bathroom, try to separate them from other household members as much as possible. **Keep people at higher risk separated from anyone who is sick.**

- If possible, have only one person in the household take care of the person who is sick. This caregiver should be someone who is not at higher risk for severe illness and should minimize contact with other people in the household.
  - Identify a different caregiver for other members of the household who require help with cleaning, bathing, or other daily tasks.
- If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other family or household members.
- If you need to share a bedroom with someone who is sick, make sure the room has good air flow.
  - Open the window and turn on a fan to bring in and circulate fresh air if possible.
  - Maintain at least 6 feet between beds if possible.
  - Sleep head to toe.
  - Put a curtain around or place other physical divider (e.g., shower curtain, room screen divider, large cardboard poster board, quilt, or large bedspread) to separate the ill person's bed.
- If you need to share a bathroom with someone who is sick, the person who is sick should clean and disinfect the frequently touched surfaces in the bathroom after each use. If this is not possible, the person who does the cleaning should:
  - Open outside doors and windows before entering and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area.
  - Wait as long as possible before entering the room to clean and disinfect or to use the bathroom.
- If you are sick, do not help prepare food. Also, eat separately from the family.

Page last reviewed: April 18, 2020

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Stress and Coping

Outbreaks can be stressful

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a disease can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. **Coping with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.**

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Increased use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations

How you respond to the outbreak can depend on your background, the things that make you different from other people, and the community you live in.

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include

- Older people and people with chronic diseases who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19
- Children and teens
- People who are helping with the response to COVID-19, like doctors, other health care providers, and first responders
- People who have mental health conditions including problems with substance use

Take care of yourself and your community

Taking care of yourself, your friends, and your family can help you cope with stress. Helping others cope with their stress can also make your community stronger.

Ways to cope with stress

- **Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories**, including social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.
- **Take care of your body**.
  - Take deep breaths, stretch, or meditate .
  - Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals.
  - Exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep.
  - Avoid alcohol and drugs .
- **Make time to unwind**. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.
- **Connect with others**. Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.

Need help? Know someone who does?

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others

- Call 911
- Visit the Disaster Distress Helpline , call 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUs to 66746
- Visit the National Domestic Violence Hotline or call 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224

Know the facts to help reduce stress

Understanding the risk to yourself and people you care about can make an outbreak less stressful.

Learn and share the facts about COVID-19 and help stop the spread of rumors. When you share accurate information about COVID-19, you can help make people feel less stressed, make a connection with them, and help stop stigma.

Take care of your mental health

Call your healthcare provider if stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms. Additional information can be found at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Disaster Preparedness page.

Learn more about taking care of your emotional health during a stressful event like the COVID-19 outbreak.

For parents

Children and teens react, in part, on what they see from the adults around them. When parents and caregivers deal with the COVID-19 calmly and confidently, they can provide the best support for their children. Parents can be more reassuring to others around them, especially children, if they are better prepared.

Watch for behavior changes in your child

Not all children and teens respond to stress in the same way. Some common changes to watch for include

- Excessive crying or irritation in younger children
- Returning to behaviors they have outgrown (for example, toileting accidents or bedwetting)
- Excessive worry or sadness
- Unhealthy eating or sleeping habits
- Irritability and “acting out” behaviors in teens
- Poor school performance or avoiding school
- Difficulty with attention and concentration
- Avoidance of activities enjoyed in the past
- Unexplained headaches or body pain
- Use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs

Ways to support your child

- Talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak.
- **Answer questions** and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that your child or teen can understand.
- **Reassure your child or teen** that they are safe. Let them know it is ok if they feel upset. Share with them how you deal with your own stress so that they can learn how to cope from you.

- **Limit your family's exposure to news coverage** of the event, including social media. Children may misinterpret what they hear and can be frightened about something they do not understand.
- **Try to keep up with regular routines**. If schools are closed, create a schedule for learning activities and relaxing or fun activities.
- **Be a role model.** Take breaks, get plenty of sleep, exercise, and eat well. Connect with your friends and family members.

Learn more about caring for children during the COVID-19 outbreak and helping children cope with emergencies.

For people at higher risk for serious illness

People at higher risk for severe illness, such as older adults, and people with underlying health conditions are also at increased risk of stress due to COVID-19. Special considerations include:

- Older adults and people with disabilities are at increased risk for having mental health concerns, such as depression.
- Mental health problems can present as physical complaints (such as headaches or stomachaches) or cognitive problems (such as having trouble concentrating).
- Doctors may be more likely to miss mental health concerns among
  - People with disabilities due to a focus on treating underlying health conditions, compared to people without disabilities.
  - Older adults because depression can be mistaken for a normal part of aging.

Common reactions to COVID-19

- **Concern about protecting oneself** from the virus because they are at higher risk of serious illness.
- **Concern that regular medical care or community services may be disrupted** due to facility closures or reductions in services and public transport closure.
- **Feeling socially isolated**, especially if they live alone or are in a community setting that is not allowing visitors because of the outbreak.
- **Guilt** if loved ones help them with activities of daily living.
- **Increased levels of distress** if they:
  - Have mental health concerns before the outbreak, such as depression.
  - Live in lower-income households or have language barriers
  - Experience stigma because of age, race or ethnicity, disability, or perceived likelihood of spreading COVID-19.

Support your loved ones

Check in with your loved ones often. Virtual communication can help you and your loved ones feel less lonely and isolated. Consider connecting with loved ones by:

- Telephone
- Email
- Mailing letters or cards
- Text messages
- Video chat
- Social media

Help keep your loved ones safe.

- **Know what medications your loved one is taking.** Try to help them have a 4-week supply of prescription and over the counter medications. and see if you can help them have extra on hand.
- **Monitor other medical supplies** (oxygen, incontinence, dialysis, wound care) needed and create a back-up plan.
- **Stock up on non-perishable food** (canned foods, dried beans, pasta) to have on hand in your home to minimize trips to stores.

- If you care for a loved one living in a care facility, monitor the situation, and speak with facility administrators or staff over the phone. Ask about the health of the other residents frequently and know the protocol if there is an outbreak.

Take care of your own emotional health. Caring for a loved one can take an emotional toll, especially during an outbreak like COVID-19. There are ways to support yourself.

Stay home if you are sick. Do not visit family or friends who are at greater risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Use virtual communication to keep in touch to support your loved one and keep them safe.

What health care providers can do

- **Help connect people with family and loved ones** to help lower distress and feelings of social isolation.
- **Let older adults and people with disabilities know it is common for people to feel distressed during a crisis.** Remind them that asking for and accepting help is a sign of strength.
- **Have a procedure and referrals ready** for anyone who shows severe distress or expresses a desire to hurt him- or herself or someone else.
- See SAMHSA Coronavirus (COVID-19) Resources and Information .

What communities can do

Community preparedness planning for COVID-19 should include older adults and people with disabilities, and the organizations that support them in their communities, to ensure their needs are taken into consideration.

- Many of these individuals live in the community, and many depend on services and supports provided in their homes or in the community to maintain their health and independence.
- **Long-term care facilities should be vigilant** to prevent the introduction and spread of COVID-19. See guidance for long-term care facilities and nursing homes.

For people coming out of quarantine

It can be stressful to be separated from others if a healthcare provider thinks you may have been exposed to COVID-19, even if you do not get sick. Everyone feels differently after coming out of quarantine.

Emotional reactions to coming out of quarantine may include

- Mixed emotions, including relief after quarantine
- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- Stress from the experience of monitoring yourself or being monitored by others for signs and symptoms of COVID-19
- Sadness, anger, or frustration because friends or loved ones have unfounded fears of contracting the disease from contact with you, even though you have been determined not to be contagious
- Guilt about not being able to perform normal work or parenting duties during quarantine
- Other emotional or mental health changes

Children may also feel upset or have other strong emotions if they, or someone they know, has been released from quarantine.

For responders

Responding to COVID-19 can take an emotional toll on you, and you may experience secondary traumatic stress. Secondary traumatic stress is stress reactions and symptoms resulting from exposure to another individual's traumatic experiences, rather than from exposure directly to a traumatic event.

There are things you can do to reduce secondary traumatic stress reactions:

- Acknowledge that secondary traumatic stress can impact anyone helping families after a traumatic event.

- Learn the symptoms including physical (fatigue, illness) and mental (fear, withdrawal, guilt).
- Allow time for you and your family to recover from responding to the pandemic.
- Create a menu of personal self-care activities that you enjoy, such as spending time with friends and family, exercising, or reading a book.
- Take a break from media coverage of COVID-19.
- Ask for help if you feel overwhelmed or concerned that COVID-19 is affecting your ability to care for your family and patients as you did before the outbreak.

Learn more tips for taking care of yourself during emergency response.

Get more information about stress management for first responders from the Disaster Technical Assistance Center (SAMHSA).

Reducing Stigma

Stop the Spread of Rumors

Resources

For Everyone

- Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event
- Coronavirus Tax Relief and Economic Impact Payments

For Communities

- Coping with Stress During an Infectious Disease Outbreak
- Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health during an Infectious Disease Outbreak

For Families and Children

- Helping Children Cope with Emergencies
- Coping After a Disaster – A Ready Wrigley activity book for children age 3-10

For People at Higher Risk for Serious Illness

- Serious Illness Care Program COVID-19 Response Toolkit

For First Responders

- Emergency Responders: Tips for Taking Care of Yourself
- Disaster Technical Assistance Center (SAMHSA)

Page last reviewed: April 30, 2020

What You Can do if You are at Higher Risk of Severe Illness from COVID-19

Are You at Higher Risk for Severe Illness?

Based on what we know now, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- People aged 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility

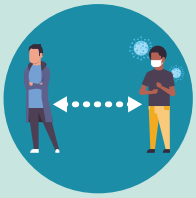
People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- People who have serious heart conditions
- People who are immunocompromised
  - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications.
- People with severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- People with diabetes
- People with chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- People with liver disease

Here's What You Can do to Help Protect Yourself

Stay home if possible.

Wash your hands often.



Avoid close contact (6 feet, which is about two arm lengths) with people who are sick.

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.

Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others.

Cover coughs and sneezes.

Call your healthcare professional if you are sick.

For more information on steps you can take to protect yourself, see CDC's How to Protect Yourself

cdc.gov/coronavirus

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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

People with Disabilities

COVID-19 is a new disease and we are still learning how it spreads, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States.

Disability alone may not be related to higher risk for getting COVID-19 or having severe illness. Most people with disabilities are not inherently at higher risk for becoming infected with or having severe illness from COVID-19. However, some people with disabilities might be at a higher risk of infection or severe illness because of their underlying medical conditions. All people seem to be at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 if they have serious underlying chronic medical conditions like chronic lung disease, a serious heart condition, or a weakened immune system. Adults with disabilities are three times more likely than adults without disabilities to have heart disease, stroke, diabetes, or cancer than adults without disabilities.

You should talk with your healthcare provider if you have a question about your health or how your health condition is being managed.

Disability Groups and Risk

If you have one of the disability types listed below, you might be at increased risk of becoming infected or having unrecognized illness. You should discuss your risk of illness with your healthcare provider.

- People who have limited mobility or who cannot avoid coming into close contact with others who may be infected, such as direct support providers and family members
- People who have trouble understanding information or practicing preventive measures, such as hand washing and social distancing
- People who may not be able to communicate symptoms of illness

Protect Yourself

If you or someone you care for are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, take steps to prevent getting sick. In addition to practicing everyday preventive actions, people with disabilities who have direct support providers can help protect themselves from respiratory illness in the following ways:

- Ask your direct support provider if they are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 or if they have been in contact with someone who has COVID-19
- Tell your direct service provider to
  - Wash their hands when they enter your home and before and after touching you (e.g., dressing, bathing/showering, transferring, toileting, feeding), handling tissues, or when changing linens or doing laundry. Learn more about proper handwashing.
  - Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces (e.g., counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, bedside tables), and equipment such as wheelchairs, scooters, walkers, canes, oxygen tanks and tubing, communication boards and other assistive devices. Refer to CDC's General Recommendations for Routine Cleaning and Disinfections of Households.

Prepare

There are some additional things people with disabilities can do to prepare during the COVID-19 outbreak:

- Plan what you will do if you or your direct support provider gets sick. Create a contact list of family, friends, neighbors and local service agencies that can provide support in case you or your direct support provider becomes ill or unavailable.

- Plan at least two ways of communicating from home and work that can be used rapidly in an emergency (e.g., landline phone, cell phone, text-messaging, email). Write down this information and keep it with you.
- Have enough household items and groceries so that you will be comfortable staying home for a few weeks, at least a 30-day supply of over the counter and prescription medicines and any medical equipment or supplies that you might need. Some health plans allow for a 90-day refill on prescription medications. Consider discussing this option with your healthcare provider. Make a photocopy of prescriptions, as this may help in obtaining medications in an emergency situation.

About COVID-19

- Coronavirus disease is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It is also possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes. For more information go to CDC's Fact Sheet- What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) .
- Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are in close contact with someone known to have COVID-19, such as healthcare workers, direct support providers, and household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

Prevention and Treatment

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often. There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

More Information

People Who Need to Take Extra Precautions

People who are at higher risk for severe illness

Other At-Risk Populations

Symptoms & Testing

If You Are Sick or Caring for Someone

Cases and Updates

Page last reviewed: April 7, 2020

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Keeping Children Healthy While School's Out

Help stop the spread of COVID-19

Take steps to protect children and others from getting sick

Help stop the spread of COVID-19 by doing the same things everyone should do to stay healthy. Teach your children to do the same.

- **Clean hands often** using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Avoid people who are sick** (coughing and sneezing).
- **Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces daily** in household common areas (like tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets, and sinks).
- **Launder items** including washable plush toys as needed. Follow the manufacturer's instructions. If possible, launder items using the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely. Dirty laundry from an ill person can be washed with other people's items.

You can find additional information on preventing COVID-19 at How to Protect Yourself and at Preventing COVID-19 Spread in Communities. Additional information on how COVID-19 is spread is available at How COVID-19 Spreads.

Limit time with other children

Practice social distancing

The key to slowing the spread of COVID-19 is to limit contact as much as possible. While school is out, children should not have in-person playdates with children from other households. If children are playing outside their own homes, it is essential that they remain 6 feet from anyone who is not in their own household.

To help children maintain social connections while social distancing, help your children have supervised phone calls or video chats with their friends.

Clean hands often

Make sure children practice everyday preventive behaviors, such as washing their hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. **This is especially important if you have been in a public place.**

Change spring break & travel plans

Revise spring break and travel plans if they included non-essential travel.

If children meet in groups, it can put everyone at risk. Children with COVID-19 may only have mild symptoms, but they can still pass this virus onto others who may be at higher risk, including older adults and people who have serious underlying medical conditions.

Limit time with older adults and people with serious underlying medical conditions

Older adults and people who have serious underlying medical conditions are at highest risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

- If others in your home are at particularly high risk for severe illness from COVID-19, consider extra precautions to **separate your child from those people**.
- If you are unable to stay home with your child while school is out, carefully consider who might be best positioned to provide child care. If someone at higher risk for COVID-19 will be providing care (older adult, such as a grandparent or someone with a chronic medical condition), **limit your children's contact with other people**.
- Consider **postponing visits or trip to see older family members and grandparents**. Connect virtually or by writing letters and sending via mail.

Children 2 years and older should wear a cloth face covering

Children 2 years and older should wear a cloth face covering their nose and mouth when in the community setting. This is an additional public health measure people should take to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in addition to (not instead of) social distancing, frequent hand cleaning and other everyday preventive actions. A cloth face covering is not intended to protect the wearer, but may prevent the spread of virus from the wearer to others. This would be especially important in the event that someone is infected but does not have symptoms. Medical masks and N-95 respirators are still reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders, as recommended by current CDC guidance.

Keep children healthy

Watch your child for any signs of illness

- If you see any sign of illness consistent with symptoms of COVID-19, particularly fever, cough, or shortness of breath, call your healthcare provider and keep your child at home and away from others as much as possible. Follow CDC's guidance on what to do if you are sick.

Watch for signs of stress in your child

- Some common changes to watch for include excessive worry or sadness, unhealthy eating or sleeping habits, and difficulty with attention and concentration. For more information, see the "For Parents" section of CDC's Stress and Coping.
- Take time to talk with your child or teen about the COVID-19 outbreak. Answer questions and share facts about COVID-19 in a way that your child or teen can understand.
- Go to CDC's Helping Children Cope with Emergencies for more information.

Teach and reinforce everyday preventive actions

- Parents and caretakers play an important role in teaching children to wash their hands. Explain that hand washing can keep them healthy and stop the virus from spreading to others.
- Be a good role model—if you wash your hands often, they're more likely to do the same.
- Make handwashing a family activity.
- Learn more about handwashing and other everyday preventive actions.

Help your child stay active

- Encourage your child to play outdoors—it's great for physical and mental health. Take a walk with your child or go on a bike ride.
- Use indoor activity breaks (like stretch breaks or dance breaks) throughout the day to help your child stay healthy and focused.

Help your child stay socially connected

- Reach out to friends and family via phone or video chats.
- Write cards or letters to family members they may not be able to visit.
- Some schools and non-profits, such as the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning and The Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence , have resources for social and emotional learning. Check to see if your school has tips and guidelines to help support social and emotional needs of your child.

Ask about school meal services

Check with your school on plans to continue meal services during the school dismissal. Many schools are keeping school facilities open to allow families to pick up meals or are providing grab-and-go meals at a central location.

Help children continue learning

Stay in touch with your child's school

- Many schools are offering lessons online (virtual learning). Review assignments from the school, and help your child establish a reasonable pace for completing the work. You may need to assist your child with turning on devices, reading instructions, and typing answers.
- Communicate challenges to your school. If you face technology or connectivity issues, or if your child is having a hard time completing assignments, let the school know.

Create a flexible schedule and routine for learning at home

- Have consistent bedtimes and get up at the same time, Monday through Friday.
- Structure the day for learning, free time, healthy meals and snacks, and physical activity.
- Allow flexibility in the schedule—it's okay to adapt based on your day.

Consider the needs and adjustment required for your child's age group

- The transition to being at home will be different for preschoolers, K-5, middle school students, and high school students. Talk to your child about expectations and how they are adjusting to being at home versus at school.
- Consider ways your child can stay connected with their friends without spending time in person.

Look for ways to make learning fun

- Have hands-on activities, like puzzles, painting, drawing, and making things.
- Independent play can also be used in place of structured learning. Encourage children to build a fort from sheets or practice counting by stacking blocks.
- Practice handwriting and grammar by writing letters to family members. This is a great way to connect and limit face-to-face contact.
- Start a journal with your child to document this time and discuss the shared experience.
- Use audiobooks or see if your local library is hosting virtual or live-streamed reading events.

Children may have mild symptoms

Based on available evidence, children do not appear to be at higher risk for COVID-19 than adults. While some children and infants have been sick with COVID-19, adults make up most of the known cases to date.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar in children and adults. However, children with confirmed COVID-19 have generally shown mild symptoms. Reported symptoms in children include cold-like symptoms, such as fever, runny nose, and cough. Vomiting and diarrhea have also been reported.

It's not known yet whether some children may be at higher risk for severe illness, for example, children with underlying medical conditions and special healthcare needs. There is more to learn about how the disease impacts children. You can learn more about who is most at risk for health problems if they have COVID-19 infection on Are You at Higher Risk for Severe Illness.

More Information

ASL Video Series: Tips to Keep Children Healthy While School is Out

ASL Video Series: Answers to Questions from Children about COVID-19

Essentials for Parenting Toddlers and Preschoolers

Page last reviewed: April 28, 2020

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

COVID-19 and Animals

Key Points

- We do not know the exact source of the current outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), but we know that it originally came from an animal source.
- At this time, there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading the virus that causes COVID-19.
- Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.
- We are still learning about this virus, but it appears that it can spread from people to animals in some situations.

For more information, see COVID-19 and Animals Frequently Asked Questions. For information on pets, see If You Have Pets.

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some coronaviruses cause cold-like illnesses in people, while others cause illness in certain types of animals, such as cattle, camels, and bats. Some coronaviruses, such as canine and feline coronaviruses, infect only animals and do not infect humans.

Risk of animals spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to people

Some coronaviruses that infect animals can sometimes be spread to humans and then spread between people, but this is rare. This is what happened with the virus that caused the current outbreak of COVID-19. However, we do not know the exact source of this virus. Public health officials and partners are working hard to identify the source of COVID-19. The first infections were linked to a live animal market, but the virus is now spreading from person to person.

The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads mainly from person to person through respiratory droplets from coughing, sneezing, and talking. Recent studies show that people who are infected but do not have symptoms likely also play a role in the spread of COVID-19. At this time, there is no evidence that animals play a significant role in spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Based on the limited information available to date, the risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is considered to be low.

Risk of people spreading the virus that causes COVID-19 to animals

We are still learning about this virus, but we know it is primarily spreading from person-to-person and it appears that it can spread from people to animals in some situations.

The first case in the United States of an animal testing positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 was a tiger with a respiratory illness at a zoo in New York City. Samples from this tiger were collected and tested after several lions and tigers at the

zoo showed signs of respiratory illness. Public health officials believe these large cats became sick after being exposed to a zoo employee who was infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. This investigation is ongoing.

The first US case of an animal testing positive for COVID-19 was a tiger at a NY zoo.

CDC is working with human and animal health partners to monitor this situation and will continue to provide updates as information becomes available. Further studies are needed to understand if and how different animals could be affected by COVID-19.

For more information, visit CDC's If You Have Pets and Healthy Pets, Healthy People website.

Guidance and recommendations

- Interim Guidance for Public Health Professionals Managing People with COVID-19 in Home Care and Isolation Who Have Pets or Other Animals
- Interim recommendations for intake of companion animals from households where humans with COVID-19 are present
- Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Veterinary Clinics
- Evaluation for SARS-CoV-2 Testing in Animals

Related Resources

COVID-19 and Animals FAQs

COVID-19 and Pets

Information on Bringing an Animal into the United States

World Organisation for Animal Health: Q&As on COVID-19

USDA: Coronavirus Disease 2019

FDA: Coronavirus Disease 2019

USDA Statement on the Confirmation of COVID-19 Infection in a Tiger in New York

Page last reviewed: April 30, 2020

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Visiting Parks and Recreational Facilities

Protect Yourself and Others from COVID-19

Staying physically active is one of the best ways to keep your mind and body healthy. In many areas, people can visit parks, trails, and open spaces as a way to relieve stress, get some fresh air and vitamin D, stay active, and safely connect with others.

Know before you go: While these facilities and areas can offer health benefits, it is important that you follow the steps below to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

DO	DON'T
✓ Visit parks that are close to your home	✗ Visit parks if you are sick or were recently exposed to COVID-19
✓ Prepare before you visit	✗ Visit crowded parks
✓ Stay at least 6 feet away from others ("social distancing") and take other steps to prevent COVID-19	✗ Use playgrounds
✓ Play it safe around and in swimming pools. Keep space between yourself and others	✗ Participate in organized activities or sports

Don't: Visit parks if you are sick or were recently exposed to COVID-19

- If you are sick with COVID-19, were recently exposed (within 14 days) to someone with COVID-19, or just don't feel well, do not visit public areas including parks or recreational facilities.
- Follow recommended steps to take if you are sick.

Do: Visit parks that are close to your home

Traveling long distances to visit a park may contribute to the spread of COVID-19 as:

- Most travel requires you to stop along the way or be in close contact with others.
- Travel may also expose you to surfaces contaminated with the virus that causes COVID-19.

Don't: Visit crowded parks

- Do not visit parks where you cannot stay at least 6 feet away from others at all times.

Do: Prepare before you visit

State or local parks

State and local authorities will decide whether parks and other recreational facilities will open. Check with the park in advance to be sure you know which areas or services are open, such as bathroom facilities and concessions, and bring what you need with you.

National parks

The National Park Service will decide on a park-by-park basis whether a national park will be open. Please check with individual parks for specific details since, in many cases, visitor centers, concessions, and bathroom facilities might be closed.

Beaches or other swimming areas

State and local authorities will decide whether natural bodies of water and beaches or swim areas will be open. Please check with individual beaches or swim areas for specific details.

Do: Stay 6 feet away from others (“social distancing”) and take other steps to prevent COVID-19

If a park, beach, or recreational facility is open for public use, visiting is okay as long as you practice social distancing and everyday steps such as washing hands often and covering coughs and sneezes. Follow these actions when visiting a park, beach, or recreational facility:

- Stay at least six feet from others at all times. This might make some open areas, trails, and paths better to use. Do not go into a crowded area.
- Avoid gathering with others outside of your household.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Bring hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol to use if soap and water are not available.

Don’t: Use playgrounds

Do not use playgrounds, including water playgrounds, located within local, state, or national parks.

Using playgrounds might lead to the spread of COVID-19 because:

- They are often crowded and could easily exceed recommended guidance for gatherings.
- It can be challenging to keep surfaces clean and disinfected.
- The virus can spread when young children touch contaminated equipment and then touch their hands to their eyes, nose, or mouth.

Don’t: Participate in organized activities or sports

In general, most organized activities and sports such as basketball, baseball, soccer, and football that are held on park fields, open areas, and courts are not recommended. These activities and sports typically require coaches and athletes who are not from the same household or living unit to be in close proximity, which increases their potential for exposure to COVID-19.

Do: Play it safe around and in swimming pools, and keep space between yourself and others

There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the water. Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (with chlorine or bromine) of pools should kill COVID-19.

Swimming and other water-related activities are excellent ways to get the physical activity needed for a healthy life. If you are not sick or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, it is safe to use swimming pools as long as steps are taken to reduce the spread of COVID-19:

- Practice social distancing by staying at least six feet (two meters) from others.
- Avoid large gatherings of more than 10 people.
- Keep your hands clean by washing hands with soap and water, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

Swimming does carry some health risks. Visit CDC's Healthy Swimming website for information to help you prevent illness and drowning, while having fun and enjoying the health benefits of swimming.

Page last reviewed: April 10, 2020

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Funeral Guidance for Individuals and Families

Grieving the loss of a loved one during the fear and anxiety about the COVID-19 pandemic can be overwhelming. It may be difficult for people to make decisions about how to safely grieve and honor their loved one. This guidance is for individuals and families as they work with funeral directors, community and religious leaders, and others to plan and hold funeral services and visitations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In some situations, many people have become sick with COVID-19 after attending a funeral service. To help prevent the spread of COVID-19 in communities, changes need to be made to the way funerals, visitations, and memorials to the deceased are held. This guidance provides strategies to protect yourself and others when you are grieving the loss of a loved one, supporting each other, making funeral arrangements, and participating in funeral services and visitations. Some examples include:

- Using technology to connect virtually with family and friends during the grieving process.
- Considering modified funeral arrangements, such as limiting attendance at funerals held during shortly after the time of death to a small number of immediate family members and friends; and then holding additional memorial services when social distancing guidelines are less restrictive.
- Practicing social distancing by maintaining at least 6 feet between attendees, facility staff, and clergy or officiants when small, in-person services are held.
- Considering modifications to funeral rites and rituals (for example, avoid touching the deceased person's body or personal belongings or other ceremonial objects) to make sure of everyone's safety.
- Wearing cloth face coverings while around others and outside of your home.

Grieving the loss of a loved one

Grief is a normal response to losing someone important to you. When a loved one dies, it is important for friends and family to be able to share stories and memories of the person and how they influenced their lives. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing, "stay at home orders," and limits to gatherings have affected the ability of friends and family to come together in person and grieve in typical ways. This is true regardless of whether the person's death was due to COVID-19 or some other cause.

Fortunately, most people understand that hosting gatherings now could be dangerous to those who would want to participate. Family and friends are finding alternate ways to connect, support each other, and grieve after their loss. They understand the need to possibly plan for additional memorial services when COVID-19-related restrictions are lifted.

Take actions to help you cope with the loss of a loved one

Grief is a universal emotion, but no two people experience grief in exactly the same way. Some actions you can take to help you cope with feelings of grief while practicing social distancing and honoring your loved one include:

- Invite people to call you, or host conference calls with family members and friends to stay connected.
- Ask family and friends to share stories and pictures with you via phone, video chat, email, text message, photo sharing apps, social media, or mailed letters.
- Create a virtual memory book, blog, or webpage to remember your loved one, and ask family and friends to contribute their memories and stories.
- Coordinate a date and time for family and friends to honor your loved one by reciting a selected poem, spiritual reading, or prayer from within their own households. Some cultures practice a prolonged mourning period with multiple observances, so hosting virtual events now and in-person events later may be in keeping with these practices.
- Seek spiritual support from faith-based organizations, including religious leaders and congregations, if applicable. People who are not part of a faith tradition or religious community can seek support from other trusted community leaders and friends.

- Use grief counseling services, support groups, or hotlines , especially those that can be offered over the phone or online, or seek support from a mental healthcare provider.
- Read books about grief and loss. If you have children, read age-appropriate books with them and talk with them about how they are feeling.
- Take part in an activity that has significance to you and the loved one you have lost, such as planting flowers or a tree or preparing a favorite meal, in memory of your loved one.
- Review additional information from CDC on loss and grief, and ways to cope with stress and anxiety.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the family and close friends of a person who died of COVID-19 may experience stigma, such as people avoiding them or rejecting them. Stigma hurts everyone by creating fear or anger toward other people. Some people may avoid contact with you, your family members, and friends when they would normally reach out to you. You can help stop stigma related to COVID-19 by knowing the facts and sharing them with extended family, friends, and others in your community.

Making Funeral Arrangements

- **People who have died from COVID-19 or from other causes can be buried or cremated.** COVID-19 does not require you to change the wishes of your deceased family member or friend.
- **In general, there is no need to delay funeral services and visitations due to COVID-19. However, some changes to traditional practices are likely needed.** In communities that have experienced large numbers of deaths, family members may need to discuss timing of services with funeral service providers, who may be overwhelmed.
- COVID-19 is a new disease, and **we are still learning how it spreads.There is currently no known risk associated with being in the same room at a funeral service or visitation with the body of a deceased person who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19 after the body has been prepared for viewing.**
- Take precautions when planning and holding funeral services and visitations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 among those in attendance, including those who may not have symptoms.

Practice social distancing while making funeral arrangements

- Consider having virtual or phone meetings instead of in-person meetings with funeral home staff, cemetery staff, clergy or officiants, and others to plan funeral arrangements.
- If you need to meet in person, follow everyday preventive actions to protect yourself and others from COVID-19, such as wearing a cloth face covering, social distancing, washing your hands often, and covering coughs and sneezes.
- Do not attend in-person meetings if you are sick, might have been exposed to COVID-19, or have higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Discuss options for making changes to traditional funeral plans

- Discuss your cultural or religious traditions and the funeral wishes of the deceased, if applicable, with family members and the people you are working with (funeral home staff, clergy, or officiants).
  - Identify any potential concerns and determine options to make changes to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Preserve traditional practices when it is possible to safely do so, and identify whether modified or new practices could satisfy the needs and values of you and your loved one.
- Consider whether it would be acceptable to hold modified funeral arrangements by limiting attendance to a small number of immediate family members and friends shortly after the time of death. Consider holding additional memorial services in the future when social distancing guidelines are less restrictive.
  - When you are making decisions about who should attend, consider how emotionally difficult social distancing practices might be for attendees (such as keeping at least 6 feet apart and not hugging other attendees who do not live in their household).
- Ask the people you are working with (funeral home staff, clergy, or officiant) about resources they may be able to provide, such as:
  - Virtual funeral services, visitations, and memorial tributes by online video streaming or recorded video. Consider potential issues with virtual attendees' access to technology and high-speed internet, as well as how any technological difficulties during the service could impact the event.

    - Online guestbooks or memory books that invite people to share stories, notes of condolence, or photos.
    - Assistance with sharing details about the plan for funeral services and visitations with extended family and friends, including how to compassionately communicate any changes to traditional practices and the reasons they are necessary.

Holding funeral services and visitations

Familial and cultural expectations might put pressure on you and others to participate in or hold or schedule funeral services and visitations. During the COVID-19 pandemic, those expectations may need to be relaxed to protect the safety of those who would have participated. **People continue to** get exposed to COVID-19 at funeral services**; the people giving it to others were not feeling sick at the time and did not know they were carrying or spreading COVID-19.**

Consider the following modifications to funeral services and visitations to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. These modifications are recommended for events held in any setting, including funeral homes, cemetery facilities, places of worship, private homes, and other venues.

Limit the attendees to a small number of immediate family and close friends

- Follow the guidelines from state and local officials and state and local health departments.
- Those who are sick, have a household member or other close contact who is sick, or are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should **not** attend in person.
- Consider limiting the number of people from different areas of the country or any areas with significant spread of COVID-19.
- Consider offering other ways for family and friends to participate, such as by phone or online (live or recorded).

Practice social distancing and everyday preventive actions

- Consider holding services and gatherings in a large, well-ventilated area or outdoors, as circumstances and traditions allow.
- Space out seating for attendees who do not live in the same household to at least six feet apart.
- Attendees who do not live in the same household should stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) apart and wear a cloth face covering when interacting with people who do not live in their household.
- People who have been living in the same household can comfort each other in typical ways such as hugging, holding hands, and sitting next to each other.
- Attendees should nod, bow, or wave instead of holding or shaking hands, hugging, or kissing anyone who does not live in their household.
- All attendees should follow everyday preventive actions to protect themselves and others from COVID-19, such as washing your hands often and covering coughs and sneezes.

Consider changing traditional rituals or practices

Discuss with the funeral home director, clergy or officiant, and your family any potential changes that might be necessary to protect all of the participants and attendees. Consider options for modified or new practices that would be acceptable to you and your family and friends, such as:

- Holding a graveside-only service.
- Changing or removing funeral practices that involve close contact or sharing things among members of different households, such as:
    - Sharing a car or limousine ride between the church and cemetery.
    - Providing food and beverages for attendees after the service.
- Changing religious rituals in consultation with clergy and other religious leaders.

If some traditions, such as certain religious rituals, sharing rides to the gravesite, or having food and beverages, are considered essential to you and your family and friends, consider modifying them.

- Limit sharing of items, such as worship aids, prayer books, and other items shared or passed by clergy and attendees during religious rituals.
- Group household members together inside the vehicle. Avoid having non-household members sharing vehicles to travel between locations during the services; if necessary, increase ventilation by opening windows or using the air conditioner on non-recirculating mode.
- Have pre-packaged meal boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal.

In some cultures, bringing food or gifts to grieving family members is an important way to express care and concern. During the COVID-19 pandemic, consider expressing care in ways that do not involve personal interactions. Consider delivering food or gifts to grieving family members in ways that keep people at least 6 feet apart, mailing care packages, or giving families gift cards for food delivery services.

Avoid touching the deceased person's body before preparation

There are many different cultural traditions involved in the bereavement process, including some that involve touching the deceased person's body before preparation. Though we are still learning more about how COVID-19 spreads, it may be possible that you could get COVID-19 by touching the body of a deceased person who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19 prior to the body being prepared for viewing. After the body has been prepared for viewing, there may be less of a chance of the virus spreading from certain types of touching, such as holding the hand or hugging.

Take steps to protect yourself, such as:

- Avoid touching, hugging, or kissing the body of a deceased person who had confirmed or suspected COVID-19 before and during body preparation, especially if you or a member of your household are at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after any contact with the body. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Take precautions with rituals that involve touching the deceased person's body

If the deceased person had confirmed or suspected COVID-19, avoid kissing, washing, or shrouding the body before, during, and after the body has been prepared, if possible. Take precautions if participating in these activities is part of important religious or cultural practices.

- Work with your cultural and religious leaders and funeral home staff to identify how to reduce exposure as much as possible.
- People at higher risk of severe illness from COVID-19 and members of their household should not be involved in these activities.
- People conducting these activities should wear disposable gloves (nitrile, latex, or rubber). Additional protective equipment may also be required, such as disposable and waterproof isolation gowns, face shields or goggles, and facemasks (e.g., if splashing of fluids is expected).
- Following preparation of the body, safely remove gloves (and other protective equipment, if used) and throw them away. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Shower as soon as possible.
- If you did not wear an isolation gown while preparing the body, wash your clothes in the warmest setting possible and dry them completely.
- If removing personal possessions (such as wedding rings) from the body or casket, clean and disinfect the items and wash hands right away.

Additional Information

- Guidance on funeral and burial services for American Indians and Alaska Natives

- Guidance on if your family member died from COVID-19 while overseas

- If the deceased person had confirmed or suspected COVID-19, follow CDC guidelines to clean and disinfect the home and any items that will be removed from the home

If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, or feel like you want to harm yourself or others:

- Call 911
- Visit the Disaster Distress Helpline , call 1-800-985-5990, or text TalkWithUsto 66746
- Visit the National Domestic Violence Hotline or call 1-800-799-7233 and TTY 1-800-787-3224
- Contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, call 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255), or use the online Lifeline Crisis Chat .

Page last reviewed: May 10, 2020