

Important COVID-19 Prevention Information

This article has been provided to deliver reliable COVID-19 prevention information to those who are not medical professionals, and to debunk inaccurate advice that has become rampant. While the threat of this pandemic should be taken seriously, there is no need to fear, but proper precautions and readiness are prudent and entirely necessary.

COVID-19 Symptoms and Warnings

What makes COVID-19 a bigger problem is that infected people can be contagious for several weeks before showing any signs of illness. Since people who have been traveling, especially those who have been traveling using a commercial airline, have had more opportunities to be exposed to the disease, they pose a greater risk than a person who lives in an uninfected rural area.

If you have been traveling, or if you live in a community where there has been an active case of COVID-19, consider self-quarantine. At the very least, avoid places where people congregate, such as busy stores, large meetings, movie theaters, and public transportation. Those who are in, or have traveled in a [Level 2 or 3 county](#), should consider self-quarantine for two weeks.

Diagnosis of COVID-19: Medical professionals use special tests to identify those who have COVID-19, so don't expect to be able to self-diagnose. Symptoms can include the same characteristics as the seasonal flu or pneumonia; fever, cough, and sometimes difficulty breathing. Sneezing is not a typical symptom of COVID-19.

Getting Help: If you or a member of your family has these symptoms, it's probably not COVID-19, but ill people should still self-quarantine. If the symptoms persist or become severe, call your doctor. If the sick person develops a fever of 100.4 or higher, call your health care provider for advice. If the

individual is having labored breathing, call emergency services (9-1-1) for advice or aid.

Don't go to your doctor's office, nor to a clinic or the hospital, unless the situation is becoming life-threatening. In a non-emergency situation, it is better to telephone your local health department, or your family physician, and get instructions over the phone.

Calling Emergency Services: If you don't have a doctor, call the non-critical emergency services number for your area. For actual emergencies, call 9-1-1 in the US, 999 in the UK, 112 in Europe, 101 in Israel; with GSM mobile phones, calls to 112 will be rerouted to the local emergency services number.

First Responder and Health Care Workers: If you are a health care professional, firefighter or police officer, give symptomatic people a disposable face mask and ask them to wear it. Keep your distance as much as possible. If you suspect COVID-19, back off and call for a specialty unit. If you must intervene, only one First Responder should touch the patient and their surroundings, and that individual should decontaminate themselves and their vehicle immediately after leaving the scene.

Safe Distance from a Coughing Person: Maintain a distance of a minimum of 6-feet (2m) from a person you suspect might have contracted a coronavirus.

Pet Dogs and Cats: Currently, dogs and cats are not susceptible to the Coronavirus. Nevertheless, they can become a carrier if an infected stranger pets their fur.

Public Contacts: If a sick person shows up at your business or meeting place, it is reasonable to courteously ask them to leave. If you are unwilling to do this, give them a packet of tissues and ask them to sit away from others.

The Seriousness of the COVID-19 Threat

The current conservative estimate is that COVID-19 is 10X more virulent than the flu (influenza). Seniors and those who already have compromised health are particularly vulnerable.

Preliminary statistics indicate that those infected who are over 65-years of age, and those who already suffer compromised health, will have a much higher death rate, perhaps as high as 85%. However, even statistics for the general population suggest that 15% of those who contract the disease will become seriously ill, 5% critically ill, and 1-5% of the infected people die.

However, it is important to understand that reliable statistics are not yet available. Therefore, since this disease can be deadly for anyone, protection and avoidance are important for every person and all age groups.

Comparing COVID-19 to the Seasonal Flu (Influenza)

At this point, most experts consider COVID-19 to be 10X more lethal than the 2018-2019 flu season. According to the [U.S. Centers for Disease Control](#), last year's flu season resulted in the death of 34,200 Americans. The [World Health Organization reports](#) that the 2018-2019 worldwide death toll was between 290,000 to 650,000.

The Scope of the COVID-19 Problem: If the 10% projection for COVID-19 is accurate, hospitals will not be able to handle the patient load, and the projected death toll this year from COVID-19 will be 342,000 people in the U.S. and 3,000,000 to 6,000,000 people worldwide. This is in addition to losses from the seasonal flu.

Becoming Self-Reliant is Paramount

Each of us must be proactive. And, each household must be ready to be self-contained, independent and self-reliant.

Today, each of us must implement rigorous personal hygiene practices, and we need to institute our own disease prevention practices. Then, we need to get ready to self-quarantine for a minimum of one month; plus, yet another month for the at-home isolation of loved ones who may get sick.

This will not only require medicine, extra food, and water, but also an extensive supply of household cleaning supplies. Especially important will be a stockpile of unscented liquid household bleach, paper towels, and a place to burn waste.

Due to the potential for our health care systems to become overwhelmed, we must be ready to personally care for family members and friends who get sick. Therefore, in advance, we need to establish our own protocols to keep healthy people healthy, while we care for the needs of our sick loved ones.

Monitoring the COVID-19 Threat

Johns Hopkins CSSE provides an excellent near real-time update of the spread of COVID-19 and its effect. [Click Here](#) to visit their website. For current information from the CDC on the COVID-19 virus, [Click Here](#).

Hopefully, COVID-19 will be a short-duration problem. Either way, being prepared makes it possible for us to live without fear. Fear is only productive if it spurs us toward appropriate action. Thankfully, fear is wholly unnecessary for those who are proactive and get ready.

Top-10 COVID-19 Prevention Tips

Top-10 Coronavirus COVID-19 Precautions, Tips, and Debunking COVID-19 Myths and Ineffective Prevention Recommendations

1. Personal Hygiene is Crucial. For most people, frequent hand washing is the first line of defense against coronaviruses such as COVID-19 as well as seasonal flu and other common contagious diseases. A quick splash in the sink is not adequate. Use the WHO Handwashing Steps described below.

Antibacterial Soap: COVID-19 and the flu are viruses, not bacteria, so antibacterial soap will not neutralize it. These products may still be good soaps to use, but it is the combination of soap, large amounts of water, plus proper handwashing technique, that is needed to remove a virus. Soap is important, but it does not need to be antibacterial.

Hand Sanitizer: Spritzing your hands with these gels or liquids is NOT effective against a virus such as COVID-19. The percentage of alcohol they contained is low, and the rest of the liquid may, perhaps, be antibacterial, but it is not antiviral.

Isopropyl Alcohol: Undiluted alcohol can be useful for neutralizing viruses, but it must be used as a scrub with prolonged contact with the skin, using the WHO Handwashing Steps described above. A quick splash of alcohol is inadequate. Hand sanitizer may be better than nothing, and it may help kill germs, but it will not neutralize a virus such as COVID-19 or seasonal flu.

Face Touching: Break the habit of touching your face. Don't touch your nose, rub your mouth, or wipe your eyes with your hand.

Coughing: If you don't have a disposable tissue to cover your face, cough into your elbow rather than your hand.

Cleaning Work Surfaces, Counters, and Equipment: When possible, items used by the general public or children should be cleaned using a

bleach-based disinfectant at least daily; heavily-used hard surfaces such as counters and non-carpeted floors should be cleaned more often. Wear disposable medical gloves when cleaning or using bleach or cleaning chemicals, use disposable towels when possible, and properly dispose of these items after use. If you don't have gloves, wash your hands to remove all chemical residue. The [CDC recommended cleaning product is diluted bleach](#).

Mobile Phones, Purses, Backpacks, Car Steering Wheels: These items tend to collect germs, bacteria, and viruses such as COVID-19. Clean them according to the manufacturer's recommendations. Purse and backpack bottoms are often set on the floor or other surfaces that may contain the virus. Handles and straps often touch by a hand should also be cleaned regularly.

2. Greeting People: Rather than shaking hands, greet people with a slight bow, elbow bump, or a salutation that does not involve skin-to-skin touch. Hugging is safer than a handshake.

3. Buttons and Light Switches: When in public places, use your elbow, knuckle, or pen tip to touch elevator buttons and light switches. Whenever possible, use a body part other than your hand to open and close doors, cabinets, etc.

4. Doorknobs, Door Handles, and Levers: Open public-area doors and fuel-pump levers with a disposable tissue (and dispose of it). Medical gloves are an alternative, but they need to be discarded immediately after touching a surface that might be contaminated.

Gloves: Wearing gloves, including medical gloves, is not effective for protection unless they are discarded after touching something that might be contaminated by the virus. If you are responsible for a public place or have had guests visit your home or office, disinfect doorknobs and hard surfaces such as tabletops, desks, and writing implements such as pens and pencils, and wear disposable gloves when undertaking these tasks. If gloves are not available, wash your hands thoroughly after completing these cleaning tasks.

5. Disinfecting Wipes: Carry disposable Clorox wipes in a zip-lock plastic bag, and use them to disinfect grocery cart handles and other grab surfaces. Select wipes that contain bleach or a true antimicrobial agent. Small amounts of alcohol and a brisk wipe will NOT neutralize the COVID-19 virus, but it is possible to use alcohol or other liquid cleaning products to wipe the virus off of a smooth surface. Dispose of the wipe immediately, or put it into a small plastic bag for disposal.

6. Tissue Packets: Carry a small package of disposable tissues in your pocket or purse. Use them when you need to grab something such as a door handle and dispose of it immediately afterward. Stuffing a potentially contaminated tissue into your pocket or purse for disposal later is not a good solution. If you must retain it, carry a small zip-lock bag to secure the waste.

Paper Face Masks: The prime value of a disposable face mask is when they are worn by the sick person. By wearing it, their coughs and sneezes are somewhat contained. The COVID-19 virus is too small to be stopped by an N95 medical mask, but it is useful for intercepting microscopic droplets from a cough or sneeze that may carry the virus.

A healthy person may choose to wear a face mask and protective eyewear, but the primary use of paper masks in this COVID-19 situation is when they are worn by a person who is displaying flu-like symptoms or a respiratory ailment.

7. Public Restrooms: Whenever possible, DO NOT use a restroom that has hand-drier blowers rather than paper towels. These devices can be useful for drying your hands, but they also blow germs, bacteria, and viruses into the air you are breathing.

When entering a public restroom, use an elbow or tissue to open the door. Before using the toilet or urinal, wash your hands thoroughly as described above. Touching a soap dispenser is okay since you will be using the soap to wash your hands. Use a paper towel or tissue to shut-off the water faucet and to open/close stall doors. Do your business. Afterward, wash your hands again. Once

again, use a paper towel or tissue to turn off the faucet. When leaving the restroom, use an elbow, shoulder, tissue or paper towel to open the door. If there isn't a nearby trash can to dispose of it, throw it on the floor. Management will soon get the message that they need to add a trash bin.

8. Wear Fresh Clothes and Maintain Personal Hygiene Discipline. Using a disposable tissue or towel is better than using a clothing-covered arm, shoulder or another body part, but since we naturally touch and sit on exposed surfaces with our clothing, it is important to change clothes upon returning

If a virus such as COVID-19 comes in contact with your clothing or some other item, it can transfer to it and remain active and contagious for as many as 14 days. Therefore, when you take off your clothes, put them somewhere safe, and launder them to remove any residual contamination.

9. Avoid Groups of People. Air travel, shopping centers, buffet restaurants, and public meetings are all problematic. Places where equipment is shared, such as a gym, and churches where a communion cup or bread is shared, increase the risk of infection. Depending on your area and health situation, it may be best to avoid these places and group travel until a contagious disease has run its course.

10. Adaptability and Readiness. Like all emergency situations, epidemics are fluid situations and threat-levels change, so it is important for us to monitor local news sources. It is our responsibility to maintain vigilance and to adapt to changes in the situation. Visit the [CDC website](#) for protection updates.

Medicine: Even if we are healthy today, that may change tomorrow, so we need to have a sufficient quantity of the personal prescription medicines that you routinely take, plus over-the-counter meds including a fever-reducer such as aspirin or ibuprofen, an anti-diarrheal such as Pepto-Bismol or Kaopectate, and a cold medicine like Alka-Seltzer Plus Cold or Robitussin Severe Multi-Symptom Cold and Flu).

Individuals who live without much exposure to the sun or who have dark skin might also take a small dose of Vitamin-D. A water-soluble multivitamin is advantageous as maintaining good health is the body's first line of defense against infection.

Water: Since an extended period of self-quarantine may become necessary, we also need to store a sufficient quantity of healthy food, drinking water and the ability to purify water to 0.02 micron absolute (such as the Sawyer ZeroTWO Purifier), and a source of clean water and supplies for cleaning, disinfecting, and personal sanitation (soap, toilet paper, tissues, etc.).

Food: The typical recommendation of having two weeks of food on hand is not, in our opinion, adequate. An absolute minimum of four weeks of food and a method to purify water should be considered the absolute minimum level of preparation. Even if you remain unaffected by an epidemic such as COVID-19, it may be prudent to self-quarantine until the high-risk period ends. Besides, even when this problem passes, there will soon be some other emergency that warrants such preparations.

Protection Equipment

Hand Sanitizer: Hand sanitizers are ineffective against COVID-19.

Face Masks: Most facemasks are designed to filter out dust particles, so they are wholly ineffective for protecting the wearer from bacteria and viruses such as COVID-19. Moreover, most medical masks will not filter it out, either.

The primary value of disposable paper-filter and cloth masks is when they are worn by sick people, including those who are infected with COVID-19. When worn by a sick person, liquid droplets from coughs and sneezes can be better contained by the mask.

Paper masks are single-use and become increasingly ineffective the longer they are worn. Cloth masks need to be properly laundered. Filters on professional masks need to be replaced according to the schedule supplied by the manufacturer or CDC.

Medical-grade N95 (P2/FFP2), and even N99 and N100 (P3/FFP3) masks, may be useful protection from bacteria, but they will not stop the COVID-19 virus. Yes, they may stop a droplet from a cough or sneeze that contains COVID-19, but the mask must be discarded after this exposure to have any benefit. Any COVID-19 virus that is trapped by the mask can be dangerous for as long as two weeks after exposure.

Surgical masks are similarly ineffective against the COVID-19 virus.

Eye Protection: Wearing a face mask without also wearing eye protection, is like trying to close one doorway to exposure while leaving another wide open. The COVID-19 virus can be absorbed through the eyes as well as the nose and mouth, so eye protection goes hand-in-hand with mask-protection. Goggles are better than safety glasses because they limit airflow to the eyes. When worn for this purpose, glasses and goggles need to be washed frequently with mild soap and water.

First Responders: Disposable outerwear, and a respirator designed for protection from viruses or an SCBA, must be donned before exposure. Decontamination protocols must be followed afterward. More information can be found at [CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov).

The First Line of Defense: The WHO Method

Hand Washing: For most people and circumstances, frequent hand washing with soap and copious amounts of flowing water is the best form of protection. Frequent handwashing and

periodic face washing are far more beneficial than wearing a facemask and eye protection.

The World Health Organization (WHO) handwashing technique is an example of a best-practices method. Wash your hands for 20-30 seconds, or sing the song “Happy Birthday,” twice (silently, to yourself!), to help you spend a sufficient amount of time washing your hands.

Video: [Hand-washing Steps Using the WHO Technique](#)



Illustration of the recommended WHO hand-washing method:

Isolation and Quarantine

These two words are often misunderstood and misused.

Isolation refers to the separation and restricted movement of a *sick person* who has a contagious disease, with the purpose of preventing the spread of the sickness to other people. This isolation typically occurs in a hospital setting or a special facility, but it can be accomplished at home if sufficient precautions are taken to protect those who are healthy.

Ideally, a sick person is isolated alone. When those who are ill are isolated together, serious disease can easily spread to others who may be sick but not have the feared disease.

Similarly, when an ill person is isolated or quarantined at home, caregivers and those who come in contact with the caregiver, or who come in contact with dishes, utensils, clothing, bedding, and other items used by the infected or potentially-infected person, may spread the disease.

When using the isolation-at-home or quarantine-at-home method, protocols must be established to protect those who are still in good health. It is often best for the isolated person to be housed in an RV (caravan) or an outbuilding. This makes it possible to create a buffer zone between the threat or potential threat,

and provide substantial airflow between the environments.

To further limit exposure and the potential spread of a disease, it is best to use a solitary caregiver who is wearing protection commensurate to the threat. Others can help with sterilization tasks and food preparation, but if possible, direct-contact and cleaning should be accomplished by the same person. If possible, provide video, telephone, or electronic contact between the isolated person and their friends or loved ones. This will help boost the spirits of the isolated person, and diminish the adverse emotional effects of being alone.

Quarantine is enacted on those who appear to be healthy but may have been infected by a contagious disease. This can be self-imposed, or it can be forced upon someone by a government or person in authority. By definition, this act includes both

isolation and the restriction of free movement and travel, to prevent the spread of a contagious disease that might be present.

This quarantine can be imposed on an individual, a family, roommates, a collection of friends who have been together, a group of travelers, or an entire community. It should include anyone who has been in close enough proximity of an infected, or potentially infected person, and might be a conduit for the spread of the feared disease.

Length of Time: This 'quarantine' period should continue until the gestation period between exposure and the time required to become symptomatic. To this length of time, it is prudent to add some additional time to provide for a margin of error.

General Preparations

As with all potential emergency situations, have provisions and the ability to self-quarantine (or shelter-in-place) at home for an extended period. The 36Ready.com website contains a wealth of useful information on disaster and emergency-situation preparedness.

Make a list. Go shopping now, and get what you don't have.

What you do have, check to make sure that all of your supplies are in good condition. Food, batteries, and many other items are prone to damage and shelf-life shortcomings, so inventory and refresh your supplies.

For the next 30 days or until this situation stabilizes, avoid unnecessary airline travel and large-group meetings. When reasonable, use conference calls or online meeting software such as Zoom. If you plan to travel, monitor [CDC Travel Advisories](#).

Final Thoughts

Lastly, don't panic, but be proactive.

With COVID-19 or any epidemic, and with all emergency and possible emergency situations, be vigilant, prepare in advance, and take reasonable precautions to protect yourself and those you care about. At this point, COVID-19 might be a short-term problem, or it may become a severe pandemic. No one knows.

Therefore, we need to take reasonable precautions. That's only prudent. And, even if the COVID-19 threat dissipates, these precautionary measures and preparations will not have been wasted. The unfortunate reality is that the need will arise again. That's the nature of the world and the times in which we are living. Those who want to live fearlessly, develop a lifestyle of readiness and self-sufficient living.

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