

Top-10 Coronavirus COVID-19 Prevention Tips

Real-World Precautions and Advice. And, Debunking Unhelpful COVID-19 Myths.

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 at the end of this article.

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 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 technique. 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. Clean heavily-used hard surfaces such as counters and non-carpeted floors more often.

If available, 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 use reusable rubber gloves, or you don't have gloves, wash your hands to remove all chemical residue from the reusable gloves/hands. The [CDC recommended cleaning product is diluted bleach](#): 1/3 cup of unscented liquid household bleach to 1-gallon of clean water.

Tip: There is no benefit to using expensive bleach. Tightly cap bleach bottles and store them in a darkened place. A fresh, unopened bleach bottle has a shelf-life of 6-12 months.

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. The bottom of purses and backpacks are often set on the floor or counters that may contain the virus, so they need to be cleaned at least daily. Handles and straps touched by hands 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, 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 (pens and pencils, etc.) and wear disposable gloves when cleaning. If gloves are not available, wash your hands thoroughly after completing these 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, 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.

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. COVID-19 is too small to be stopped by an N95 medical mask, but a mask may be useful for intercepting microscopic droplets from a cough or sneeze that carries the virus. Those who are ill should wear masks.

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. These devices can be useful for drying your hands, but they also blow germs, bacteria, and viruses into the air you breathe.

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, but 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 trashcan 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 home.

If a virus such as COVID-19 comes in contact with your clothing or some other item, it can transfer to it, and remain 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 equip-

ment 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 while the disease is contagious. Avoid unnecessary travel, as well.

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

Medicine: Even if you are healthy today, that may change tomorrow. So we need to have a sufficient quantity of the personal prescription medicines we 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.

Vitamins: During times of exposure to disease or infection, robust health is particularly important as this is the body's first line of defense. Vitamins can help.

Individuals who live without much exposure to the sun or who have dark skin are encouraged to take a small dose of Vitamin-D. Another beneficial vitamin supplement to ward off contagions is water-soluble Zinc, but [only the amount needed](#) to reach the Daily Recommended Allowance (DRA). A water-soluble multivitamin may also be useful for maintaining good health, and some contain a sufficient quantity of both Vitamin-D and Zinc to make additional supplements unnecessary. Unfortunately, poor quality vitamins (including some major brands) often fail to dissolve in the stomach, making them useless, so shop wisely.

Water: Since an extended period of self-quarantine may become necessary, store a sufficient quantity of healthy food, drinking water, and have the ability to purify water to 0.02 micron absolute. (Most filters and purifiers do not filter at this level. An example of one that will, is the Sawyer ZeroTWO Purifier). You will also need to identify a source of clean water, and store up sanitation supplies including toilet paper.

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 these same preparations.

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Handwashing; The First Line of Defense: The WHO Method

For most people and circumstances, frequent hand washing with soap and copious amounts of flowing water is the best form of protection against a contagious disease. Frequent handwashing and periodic face washing are far more beneficial than wearing a facemask and eye protection.

The World Health Organization (WHO) handwashing technique (below) 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 be sure you are spending sufficient time washing your hands.

HAND WASHING STEPS

 <p>0 Wet hands with water</p>	 <p>1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces</p>	 <p>2 Rub hands palm to palm</p>	 <p>3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa</p>	 <p>4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced</p>	 <p>5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked</p>
 <p>6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa</p>	 <p>7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa</p>	 <p>8 Rub each wrist with opposite hand</p>	 <p>9 Rinse hands with water</p>	 <p>10 Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel</p>	 <p>11 Your hands are now safe</p>



World Health Organization

Patient Safety

A World Alliance for Safer Health Care

SAVE LIVES

Clean Your Hands

**Be proactive.
Be safe. Be independent.
Be self-reliant.**

Be helpful to others. Make sure your family, friends, and neighbors are prepared to isolate themselves from exposure if this becomes necessary. Have sufficient provisions on hand so that trips to stores and public places can be limited or eliminated.

Visit 36Ready.com for more information on COVID-19 and other emergency readiness topics.