

How to Prevent the Spread of Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the Home

Many people with coronavirus (COVID-19) or symptoms of COVID-19 like cold symptoms, cough, fever, or shortness of breath, are told to stay home to recover. If someone in your home is recovering, take steps to prevent spreading COVID-19 to others inside and outside the home.

Help with recovery

Help the sick person follow their healthcare provider's instructions for medications and care.

If they are getting sicker, call their healthcare provider or local Indian Health Service unit for medical advice. If they have a medical emergency, call 911.

Keep the sick person away from others as much as possible

- **Stay home** and avoid having visitors.
- **Separate the sick person from others** in the home. If possible, have the sick person use a separate bedroom and bathroom that no one else uses.
- Prepare meals for them and have them eat in their own area.
- **Avoid sharing items** like dishes, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After the sick person uses the items, they should be handled with gloves and washed with hot water. Wash hands after removing gloves.
- Keep pets away. While the animals won't get sick, they may carry it to other people on their fur, collar, etc.
- Make sure that shared spaces in the home have good air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window.
- The sick person should wear a facemask around other people. If disposable ones are not available, have them wear a bandana or something else to cover their nose and mouth. When the mask or bandana gets moist or wet, it needs to be changed. The bandana can be washed and reused.
- Others can still talk, sing, play, etc. with the sick person from a safe distance (at least 6 feet) or by phone or video.

Healthy practices for everyone

Everyone in the home should **wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds** or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.

They should also **avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth**.



Clean and disinfect

- Cleaning removes dirt and germs with soap. Disinfecting kills germs with chemicals.
- **Clean and disinfect all "high-touch" surfaces**, such as counters, tables, doorknobs, light switches, faucet handles, toilets, phones, etc. multiple times each day.
- For disinfecting, use common household disinfectants like Lysol or Clorox, diluted household bleach solutions (4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water), or alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol.
- Gloves should be worn for cleaning, but they should only be used for cleaning surfaces for COVID-19. **Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.**
- If a separate bathroom is not available for only the sick person to use, the bathroom should be disinfected after each use by a sick person.
- Wear gloves when you touch or have contact with the sick person's body fluids, such as blood, saliva, mucus, or urine. Wash hands immediately afterwards.

Wash laundry thoroughly

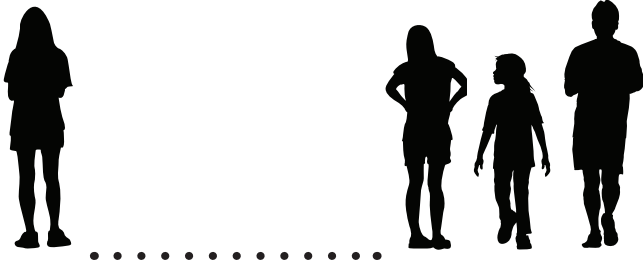
- Immediately remove and wash clothes, towels, or bedding that have body fluids on them.
- Wear gloves while handling dirty items and keep them away from your body. If gloves are not available, wash hands immediately after putting items in the wash.
- Use a normal laundry detergent according to instructions and dry thoroughly using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers.



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For more information:
[CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

How to Prevent the Spread of Germs Like Coronavirus (COVID-19) in the Home



Separate the sick person from others.



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



Clean and disinfect all "high-touch" surfaces multiple times each day.



Avoid sharing household items.



Wear a bandana or facemask over nose and mouth.



Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.



Wear gloves for cleaning. Wash hands immediately after gloves are removed.



Wash laundry thoroughly.

ELDER MENTAL HEALTH DURING COVID-19



ADDRESS THE RISK

The outbreak of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) may be stressful for elders. Older adults are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 given their weaker immune systems, the higher COVID-19 mortality rate found in the older population, and their limited information sources. Providers should be aware of especially high-risk groups such as low-income elders, those living alone, and those suffering from other health conditions such as cognitive decline, dementia, or other mental health conditions.

MANAGE STRESS

- Share simple facts about the COVID-19 outbreak, including symptoms, treatment, and effective strategies to reduce risk of infection in words older people can understand. Consider whether they have cognitive impairments when speaking about risk.
- Communicate instructions in a clear, concise, and respectful way. Information may be displayed in writing or pictures.
- Engage families with information and help them practice prevention measures such as handwashing.
- Contact elders via landline phones.
- Encourage family or friends to call their elders regularly and teach elders how to use video (chat).

DEFINITIONS

Communities, families, and elders must take steps to protect elders:

What is Social Distancing?

Social distancing means remaining out of settings with large groups of people and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet) from others when possible. People can practice social distancing while remaining connected to others through the phone and other forms of technology.

What is Isolation?

Isolation means the separation of a person or group of people known or reasonably believed to be infected with a communicable disease and potentially infectious, from those who are not infected, to prevent spread of the disease. Isolation for public health purposes may be voluntary or compelled by federal, state, or local public health order.

What is Quarantine?

Quarantine means the separation of a person or group of people reasonably believed to have been exposed to a communicable disease but not yet symptomatic. The person or group of people must be separated from others who have not been so exposed to prevent the possible spread of the disease.



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Learn more: [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

Ways to Support Elders with Medical Needs

Elders with mild cognitive impairment or early stages of dementia need to be informed of what is happening within their capacity and provided support to ease their anxiety and stress. For people at moderate and late stages of dementia, their medical and daily living needs need to be met during the quarantine time.

- Medical needs of older adults with/without COVID-19 need to be met during the outbreak. This includes uninterrupted access to essential medicines (for diabetes, cancer, kidney disease, HIV). Telemedicine and online medical services can be used to provide medical services.
- Isolated or infected older people should be presented with truthful information on risk factors and chances of recovery.
- During quarantine, adjust respite or home care services to use technology (WeChat, WhatsApp) to provide trainings/counseling for family caregivers at home, and include psychological first aid training for family caregivers.

Ask for help if you feel overwhelmed or concerned that COVID-19 is affecting your ability to care for your patients as you did before the outbreak.

SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline
Toll-Free: 1-800-985-5990 (English and Español)

Activities That Support Elder Well-being During Isolation or Quarantine

- Physical exercise like yoga, tai chi, and stretching.
- Cognitive exercises such as word search, Sudoku, and crossword puzzles.
- Relaxation exercises including breathing, meditation, and mindfulness.
- Reading books and magazines.
- Reducing the time spent looking at fearful images on TV.
- Reducing time listening to rumors.
- Searching information from reliable sources such as CDC.gov.
- Reducing time looking for information—1-2 times per day, rather than every hour.

Visit [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) for additional information.

Ways to Support Elders in Residential Care

Nursing home populations are at the highest risk of being affected by COVID-19. If infected, residents are at increased risk of serious illness.

Facilities should take these steps before there are confirmed cases in the community:

1. Educate residents, healthcare personnel, and visitors on COVID-19.
2. Provide hygiene and cleaning supplies for recommended infection prevention and control practices.
3. Evaluate and manage providers with symptoms of respiratory illness.
4. Consider new policies and procedures for visitors.
5. Evaluate and manage residents with symptoms of respiratory infection.
6. Minimize group activities inside the facility or field trips outside of the facility.
7. Develop criteria for halting group activities and communal dining, closing units or the entire facility to new admissions, and restricting visitation.
8. Create a plan for grouping residents with symptoms of respiratory infection, including dedicating providers to work only on affected units.

Facilities should take these steps when there are confirmed cases in community:

1. Implement policies and procedures for limiting visitors.
2. Implement healthcare personnel monitoring and restrictions.
3. Monitor residents for symptoms and apply appropriate restrictions of communal activities.



Photos by Ed Cunicelli