



Safer at Home: Your Guide to the Coronavirus Pandemic



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The Coronavirus Isn't Letting Up, and Neither Can We

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a season of change and unprecedented challenges. While the future seems uncertain, we need to keep pushing forward together.

We've come a long way since the first cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) were confirmed in the United States. We've learned a lot about the virus and how to treat patients who have it. We have safe, effective vaccines. We've also greatly increased our ability for testing.

You — our communities — have made tremendous efforts to adapt, too. It's heartening to see so many people protecting each other by wearing face masks in public and finding ways to have fun while respecting the rules of social distancing.

The changes we've all made to stay safe and healthy can feel challenging. But please stay vigilant. We know it's not easy, but it's critical. The virus isn't going away soon, and everyone plays a role in minimizing the spread.

The coronavirus should not be taken lightly. While most people get only mild symptoms, others develop serious complications of the lungs, brain and heart. There may also be other long-term effects that we don't yet know about. And, so far, there's no cure.

Fortunately, there are steps we can all take to prevent this. We've created this book to provide guidance on precautions you can take to help protect yourself, your loved ones and your community from further spread. These precautions are just as important now as ever. For them to be effective, we need to do all of them all of the time.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tomislav Mihaljevic".

Tomislav Mihaljevic, MD
Chief Executive Officer & President
Cleveland Clinic



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Linda".

Linda Rendle
Chief Executive Officer
The Clorox Company



Overview

The coronavirus pandemic has created a number of new challenges. Although you and your family may feel a sense of urgency to get back to normal, there are important safety guidelines that should be followed to minimize the spread of coronavirus. They are good steps to help keep your family healthy during cold and flu season as well.

Particular populations have higher risk of developing severe symptoms from coronavirus - even death. These include our parents and grandparents (over the age of 60), pregnant women, infants under the age of one, and those with obesity.

These resources will help you through the key steps of managing a household amid the pandemic, including:

- › Helping control the spread of coronavirus in your home and community.
- › Cleaning and disinfecting your home.
- › The importance of getting vaccinated against COVID-19.
- › Communicating with loved ones as they adjust to the new realities and emotional challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic.
- › Caring for family members and loved ones who are sick with coronavirus.

We are ALL in this together. Together we can beat this pandemic. But, only if we all take precautions. This guide can help.

*The response to the coronavirus pandemic is continuously evolving as we learn more about the virus and the best techniques to address the associated risks. The Clorox Company has contributed its expertise to the sections in this guide that concern cleaning and disinfecting. All other guidelines were developed through the expertise of Cleveland Clinic. Cleveland Clinic's materials are based on currently available data and guidelines from the CDC and other resources as of **March 23, 2021**. This guidance may change from time to time and should be used only as a general reference. Individuals are solely responsible for determining the best practices to deploy within their homes.*

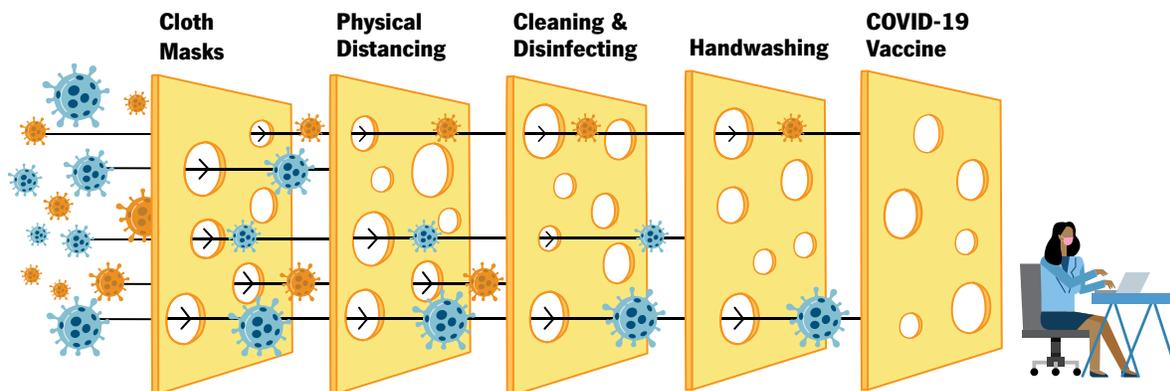
Please visit <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/landing/preparing-for-coronavirus> for the latest updates or to request additional information.



Layers of Safety

This guide shares ways to keep you safer in a pandemic. No single step is effective on its own. But they add layers of protection when used together.

One way to look at safety precautions is the **“Swiss Cheese Model”** from James Reason, PhD. In the model, there are risks in any setting. Most of the time these events never happen. Safety shields are in place to help prevent them. When a safety step is used alone, it leaves holes like a slice of Swiss cheese. Using the safety shields together helps block these holes.



We need multiple layers of safety precautions to help us stay healthy in the time of coronavirus. Some of these safety shields are:

- › Getting the COVID-19 vaccine when it is available to you.
- › Wearing a non-valved, multilayer face mask over your nose, mouth and chin can slow the spread of the virus.
- › Keeping 6 feet* from people who live outside your home.
- › Cleaning and disinfecting your home.
- › Washing your hands.

No single effort is perfect. But, together they can help control the spread of coronavirus.

General Recommendations

“The coronavirus has no boundaries. We’ve seen it strike indiscriminately in young and old, in those who were fairly healthy and those with pre-existing conditions. It’s up to us to recognize that anyone can develop coronavirus and that the illness can have terrible consequences for individuals and their loved ones.”

– *K. Kelly Hancock, DNP, RN,
Chief Caregiver Officer, Cleveland Clinic*

“These safety precautions are vital as we seek to maintain our wellbeing, that of our loved ones and those with whom we interact in the community. They are simple steps we can take to help keep people safe as we navigate through this pandemic, together.”

– *Kerry Major, MSN, RN,
Florida Regional Chief Nursing Officer,
Cleveland Clinic Florida*

General Recommendations

The best ways for you and your family to help protect yourselves from COVID-19:



Wear a face mask:

Protect yourself and others with a snug-fitting, non-valved, multilayer face mask at all times when outside of your home. This includes indoor and crowded outdoor spaces. Try to avoid touching your face.



Cover your mouth and nose:

When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve, rather than your hands. Properly dispose of your tissue in a trash can.



Practice social and physical* distancing:

Avoid non-essential group gatherings and crowded places. Maintain a 6-foot* distance from others.



Get vaccinated:

Be sure to get the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to you.



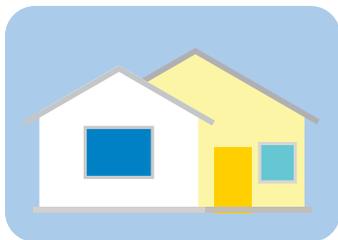
Wash your hands:

Stop the spread of disease-causing germs by washing your hands often. Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.



Clean and disinfect:

Use a virus-killing disinfectant to clean frequently touched surfaces such as phones**, keyboards**, doorknobs, handles and faucets.



Stay home when sick:

Avoid leaving home if you are sick. If you want or need to connect with your healthcare providers, first do so by phone or through virtual visits.



Avoid care facilities:

Limit nonessential visits to nursing homes, long-term care facilities or retirement communities, and ensure diligence with safety protocols if you do visit.



Maintain healthy habits:

Get enough sleep, eat healthy foods, drink plenty of water and exercise, if you are able, to help keep your immune system strong.

Face Covering

“Face masks are one of the most powerful weapons we have to help slow down the spread of coronavirus. It’s a way you can advocate for yourself. But even if you don’t want to advocate for yourself, wearing a mask to help protect others is just the right thing to do. The more safety precautions we take, the better off we’ll be as a society in really trying to beat this disease.”

– *K. Kelly Hancock, DNP, RN,
Chief Caregiver Officer, Cleveland Clinic*

“Wearing a mask is a simple act that we can do to really help to stop the spread of coronavirus. It’s a barrier that helps to protect you, as an individual, and others. You can be positive for coronavirus – and transmit it – without noticing any symptoms. The masks give you, and those around you, a layer of protection. There are many different types of masks on the market. I encourage you to explore your options and find a style that’s comfortable for you.”

– *Kerry Major, MSN, RN,
Florida Regional Chief Nursing Officer,
Cleveland Clinic Florida*

Face Covering

Face masks

Non-valved, multilayer face masks can be used for source control outside the home. Studies from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have shown that face masks effectively limit spread of the COVID-19 virus, protecting wearers as well as those around them when used as a complement to physical and social distancing. They are not a replacement for adequate distancing.

The CDC recently published research suggesting that layering a cloth mask over a surgical mask, double masking when a mask only has one layer, or knotting and tucking a single mask, may improve the fit of masks and provide additional protection from potentially infectious particles. However, if your mask already has multiple layers and fits tightly, it is not necessary to double mask.

Encourage your family to wear face coverings or masks when in public spaces as part of cough etiquette and caring for others.

School-aged children should be able to wear cloth masks. A useful strategy is to get them involved and excited about their masks (such as the style/color of mask). When appropriate distancing is in place, mask wearing can be eased. Preschool-aged children may be less likely to tolerate wearing a mask.

Those with special needs or chronic medical problems likely won't be able to tolerate wearing a mask. Mask wearing in this population should be approached on a case-by-case basis.

How to wear a mask or face cover

The CDC recommends keeping these criteria in mind when wearing a mask or face cover:

- › It should be snug but comfortable against the sides of the face.
- › It should cover the nose, mouth and chin.
- › It needs to be secured with ties or ear loops.
- › It should be non-valved and made with multiple layers of cloth.
- › It must allow you to breathe without restriction.
- › It should be able to withstand machine washing and drying without getting damaged or changing shape.
- › Disposable masks should be thrown away after each use.

How to keep masks and face covers clean

The CDC recommends washing cloth face masks frequently, either by hand or in a washing machine. Individuals should take care not to touch their eyes, nose, mouth or face when removing a worn face covering, and to wash their hands immediately after removing them as they may carry infectious contaminants.



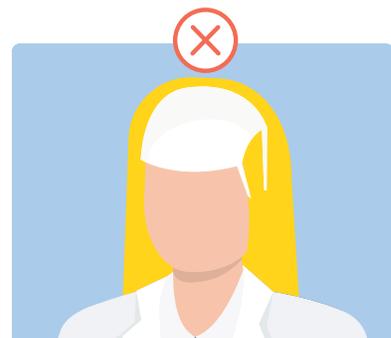
Correct



Mask Necklace



Mask Goatee



Mask Visor

5 Myths about Coronavirus and Face Masks, Debunked

Myth #1: Wearing a cloth mask is no use.

Wearing a homemade cloth face mask is an easy way you can help protect others in your family and community.

The coronavirus is thought to mainly be spread through viral droplets that come out of people's nose or mouth when they cough, sneeze or talk. Cloth masks act as a physical barrier to keep large droplets from spewing out into the air, where someone else could breathe them in and become infected.

Studies have demonstrated that cloth masks reduce the number of microorganisms that someone releases into the air. So the more people wear masks in an area, the fewer potential viral droplets go into the space, and the less risk that someone will be exposed to the virus.

If you have a mask on, it's also harder to touch your nose and mouth, which experts say could be another way that the virus gets into the body.

Myth #2: If I'm not sick, I don't need to wear a mask.

We've learned that not everyone who gets infected with coronavirus gets sick. Reports from China showed that people can be infected without showing any symptoms. These asymptomatic carriers can then unknowingly pass it on to others when they cough, sneeze or talk. This is thought to be a major factor in the quick spread of the virus.

So, because we don't know for sure who's infected, the best option is for all of us to wear masks. It's an act that contributes to a greater public good. It shows that we care for one another.

Myth #3: If I wear a mask, I don't need to social distance or stay home.

Masks are just one piece of the strategy for helping control the spread of coronavirus. Unfortunately, they won't prevent anyone from coughing or sneezing on you, and they may not prevent you from getting sick.



So it's important to follow all the recommended steps for helping protect yourself, including practicing proper social distancing when you're around others, not gathering in large groups and washing your hands frequently.

Myth #4: My mask just needs to cover my mouth.

A mask should cover your mouth and your nose. It should be snug but comfortable against the sides of your face, and you should be able to breathe without restriction. Choose one that secures with ties or ear loops. Don't wear your mask around your neck or chin, or over your head — that doesn't protect anyone.

Myth #5: Wearing a mask will make me sick.

There's been some speculation on social media that wearing a mask can cause you to rebreathe the carbon dioxide you exhale and make you sick. While inhaling high levels of carbon dioxide is dangerous, this is very unlikely to happen from wearing a cloth face mask — especially if you're only wearing it for short periods of time.

However, there are some people who shouldn't wear cloth masks. This includes kids under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing or anyone who can't take the mask off without assistance.

Vaccination

“The COVID -19 vaccine is our best defense against this pandemic. As more of us get the vaccine, we can help to reduce the spread of the infection to our loved ones and our communities, especially to those who are most vulnerable. There is still some hesitancy regarding receiving the vaccine, but the evidence has, and continues to show, that this vaccine is both safe and effective. The more people who are vaccinated means a greater level of immunity in our communities, which will help us all move closer to being able to resume our normal lives and activities.”

– Kerry Major, MSN, RN,
Florida Regional Chief Nursing Officer,
Cleveland Clinic Florida

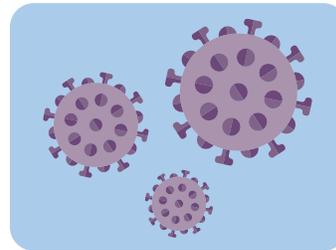
Vaccination

The arrival of the first COVID-19 vaccines sparked excitement, hope and anticipation for better days ahead. But for the COVID-19 vaccine to put an end to this deadly pandemic, enough of us need to get it. Cleveland Clinic strongly encourages you to get the vaccine when you're eligible.

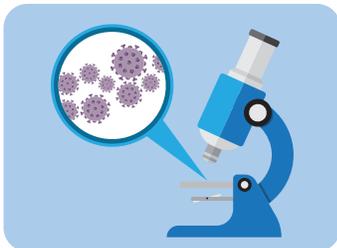
How was the COVID-19 vaccine developed and how does it work?



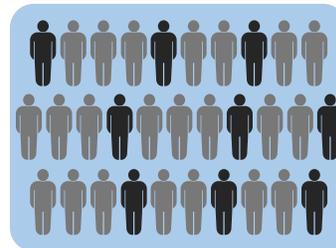
Vaccines save millions of lives each year from deadly diseases caused by viruses or bacteria. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, work on a vaccine to protect against the virus is happening at lightning speed. That doesn't mean they're skipping important steps along the way, though.



Normally, a vaccine works to train your body to recognize and respond to proteins that are produced by a bacteria or virus. All three authorized vaccines work by getting your immune system to defend itself if you are exposed to COVID-19.



Similar to other vaccines, pharmaceutical companies had to go through a well-defined process of research, development and approval before their COVID-19 vaccines can be authorized for emergency use.



We know how quickly COVID-19 can spread from person to person. When a large number of people in a community are vaccinated, the virus can't spread as easily. Encouraging as many people as possible to receive a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine is the best way we can begin to slow the spread of the virus.

Is the COVID-19 Vaccine Safe?

Yes. Given the speed of development of these vaccines, it's understandable that there are questions about whether or not there's been enough research and testing to ensure the vaccines are safe. But all vaccines must go through rigorous clinical trials to determine safety and efficacy, with at least two months of patient follow-up, and report their findings to the FDA.

As with many vaccines, you may be sore where it's injected. You may also develop fatigue, fever and muscle aches afterward. This seems to be more common with the second dose of vaccine. If this happens, it means your immune system is taking notice of the vaccine and reacting.

Should I be concerned about a severe allergic reaction to the COVID-19 vaccine?

No. Allergic reactions, including shortness of breath and hives, were uncommon during COVID-19 vaccine trials. All recipients receiving the vaccine will be monitored for at least 15 minutes after vaccination for possible immediate hypersensitive reactions. If you have a history of allergic reactions to vaccines, talk to your healthcare provider before receiving a COVID-19 vaccine.

What side effects can I expect from the vaccines?

In the clinical trials, the vaccines were very effective with only mild side effects that are common in all vaccines. These include fever, fatigue, muscle aches and headache. There were no serious safety concerns.

If I've had COVID-19 should I get vaccinated anyway?

We still recommend that you get the vaccine even if you've had COVID-19. However, you may consider waiting 90 days after getting infected as it's not common to get COVID-19 again within three months of first being infected.



If I'm pregnant, breastfeeding or trying to conceive, can I get immunized?

While pregnant and breastfeeding women weren't included in the first COVID-19 vaccine trials, safety data is reassuring. Since the vaccines don't contain the live virus, they aren't thought to increase the risk of infertility, miscarriage during the first or second trimester, stillbirth or birth defects. There's also no evidence to suggest the vaccine is a risk to a breastfeeding baby. That said, getting the vaccine while trying to conceive, during pregnancy or when you are breastfeeding is a personal choice. We encourage you to talk to your Ob/Gyn to help you make a decision together.

Handwashing

“We really have to be methodical about handwashing. When it comes to handwashing with soap and water, it’s important to scrub the fronts and backs of the hands and in between the fingers. If you use a hand sanitizer, make sure to cover all the areas.”

– *Kerry Major, MSN, RN,
Florida Regional Chief Nursing Officer,
Cleveland Clinic Florida*

Handwashing

Washing our hands is one of the easiest and most important things we help can do to stay healthy and control the spread of bacteria and viruses.

Wash your hands:

- › Whenever they look dirty.
- › Before, during and after you prepare food.
- › Before eating.
- › Before and after contact with an ill person.
- › Before and after treating a cut, sore or wound.
- › After using the toilet or changing diapers.
- › When entering or exiting the home.
- › After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. (Wash your hands more often when you are sick to prevent spreading your illness to those around you.)
- › After touching animals or animal waste.
- › After touching garbage, body fluids, or anytime you have doubt if your hands are clean.

What's the proper technique for hand washing?



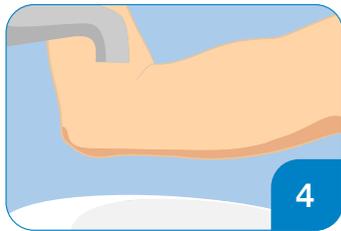
Wet your hands with clean running water (warm or cold).



Lather your hands with soap. Rub together 20+ seconds. Don't forget wrists, back of hands, between fingers and under nails.



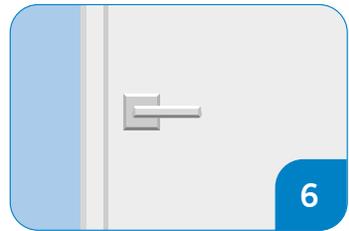
Rinse your hands well under running water.



Turn off the water with your elbow (or a clean towel).



Dry your hands with a clean towel or air dry them.



Used a towel? Use it to open the bathroom door.

When should we use alcohol-based hand sanitizers?

The CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water whenever possible to reduce the amounts and types of all germs and chemicals on them. However, if soap and water are not available, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol should be used. Hand sanitizers with lower alcohol levels are not as effective in killing germs.

Avoid wearing gloves in public

Gloves aren't always an effective protective measure for many reasons, especially when not worn or disposed of properly. There could be a tear or rip in the gloves, you could put them on or take them off incorrectly and the gloves may give you a false sense of security. Any germs that might be on your gloves can be transferred to all other surfaces and items you touch. Rather than wearing gloves improperly, it may be safer to go bare handed in public and wash your hands frequently.

Cleaning and Disinfecting the Home

Cleaning and Disinfecting the Home

We need to take extra precautions to help keep our homes safer for ourselves, our family and loved ones. These include regular cleaning and disinfection, especially of high-touch surfaces.

Cleaning removes dust and dirt from a surface. Disinfecting, when properly performed, helps destroy bacteria and viruses on hard, nonporous surfaces. Disinfecting a surface after cleaning it can help control the spread of germs from surfaces.

The CDC recommends using household disinfectants approved by the EPA for use against the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes coronavirus disease. You can see the list [here](#).

Practical cleaning and disinfection tips include:

- › Always read and follow the directions listed on the label of the cleaning product as well as the item being cleaned. Pay special attention to the precautionary statements on how to safely handle cleaning and disinfecting products. For electronics, refer to manufacturer's guide for cleaning instructions.
- › Wear gloves and appropriate personal protective equipment.
- › Ensure adequate ventilation.
- › Do not use more of the product than what is recommended on the label.
- › If disinfectant products are not readily available, you can make your own using 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) of bleach per gallon of room temperature water.
- › If the cleaner or disinfectant requires diluting, dilute as instructed on the label.
- › Avoid mixing chemical products.
- › Use and store chemicals out of the reach of children and pets.
- › Disinfect all frequently touched surfaces using EPA-approved disinfectants that meet CDC requirements for use and effectiveness against viruses and bacteria, including the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Disinfect high-touch surfaces frequently:



Door knobs and locks



Light switches



Remote control



Car/house keys



Electronic/gaming devices*



Kitchen area (door handles, appliances, countertops, faucets)



Bathrooms (sinks, countertops, toilets, faucets)

*For electronics, refer to manufacturer's guide for cleaning instructions.

Proper cleaning and disinfecting generally follows these six steps.



1. Read and follow directions on product label



2. Remove soil (clean)



3. Apply disinfectant (disinfect)



4. Wait (contact time)



5. Discard waste



5. Wash hands

Cleaning and disinfection best practices:

- Read and follow the product label, paying special attention to the precautionary statements to safely handle cleaning and disinfecting products.
- Clean and disinfect in an organized and methodical manner so that surfaces are not missed (e.g., clean and disinfect the room in a clockwise manner; break the room up into sections and clean and disinfect one section at a time).
- Clean and disinfect from high to low areas so that any dirt or dust is dislodged from above and is removed when lower surfaces are cleaned.
- Disinfect surfaces from “clean” areas to “dirty” areas (e.g., in a bathroom, disinfect the sink area first and then the toilet area) to minimize cross-contamination.
- Avoid wiping two different surfaces with the same cloth or wipe to minimize cross-contamination. Fold cloth or wipes to match the size of the hand, and use a clean side for each new surface.
- Use a cleaner disinfectant (i.e., a single product that can both clean and disinfect rather than purchasing a cleaner and a disinfectant) to streamline the cleaning process and free up storage space.



- For electronic devices, review device cleaning and care instructions and the manufacturer's warranty prior to cleaning and disinfecting.

Distancing

“Social distancing is about minimizing exposure. It cuts the risk of transmitting the virus significantly. If you can’t practice social distancing, at least wear a mask. I encourage you to find new and creative ways to connect with others while maintaining distance.”

– Kerry Major, MSN, RN,
Florida Regional Chief Nursing Officer,
Cleveland Clinic Florida

Distancing

Coronavirus spreads mainly among people who are in close contact with each other for prolonged periods of time. Since people can spread the virus before they begin to feel sick, it is important to maintain distance from others when possible.

This means practicing social and physical distancing. Social distancing means avoiding large gatherings. Physical distancing means maintaining distance (at least 6 feet or 2 meters*) from others when possible. Both social and physical distancing are important precautions.

There are three key factors to consider when contemplating an activity or event: time, space and people.

Time

Carefully weigh how much time you'll be spending at the activity. Less time means limiting your risk of exposure to the virus.

Space

Is the activity or event taking place outside or indoors? If it's indoors, consider how enclosed or ventilated the space is. During the pandemic, it is safer to be outside than inside (but that doesn't mean your chance of catching the virus outside is zero). You should consider if the space has a limit on how many people can be there at one time. This will clue you in on how easy or difficult it will be to maintain physical distance from others.

S - A - F - E

SIX AWAY FROM EVERYONE

Keep 6 feet between you + others to help prevent the spread.

People

Consider if the people with whom you'll be interacting are following and respecting safety guidelines, which include:

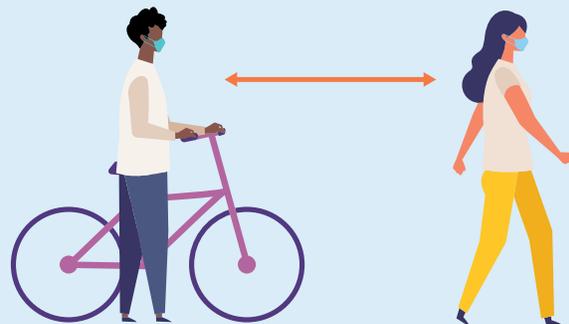
- › Physical distancing of at least 6 feet*.
- › Wearing a snug-fitting, non-valved, multilayer face mask that covers the nose, mouth and chin.
- › Practicing good hand hygiene and cleanliness.
- › Not sharing food or touching common surfaces.
- › Staying home when feeling sick.



*Cleveland Clinic recommends maintaining 6 feet of distance between yourself and others. Other authorities may make different recommendations in certain circumstances. For the most recent recommendations, please visit www.cdc.gov.

Practical tips:

- Follow health department recommendations regarding nonessential indoor spaces.
- Before you go to a restaurant, call to ensure that they address coronavirus safety guidelines, and that everyone on their staff is required to wear a face mask. When eating at a restaurant, ensure that the tables are spread out so that 6 feet* of space remains between you and other diners. Take advantage of outdoor seating at restaurants when possible. Avoid self-serve food and beverage options to limit the use of shared serving utensils, buttons or touchscreens.
- When exercising, consider going for a walk or bike ride in your neighborhood where you can maintain 6 feet* of space between yourself and others. Allow 6 feet* of space when passing others, whether indoors or outside. A mask should be worn if exercising indoors in public spaces.
- Take advantage of drive-thrus, curbside pick-up and delivery services to minimize contact with others. Be sure to maintain 6 feet* of distance between yourself and delivery providers and wear a face mask.
- Outside is better than inside when it comes to socializing. Meet others in the yard or driveway, and even then, stay 6 feet* apart.
- When out in public, watch for physical markings (such as tape on the floor or signs on walls) that direct people to remain 6 feet* apart.
- If you must take an elevator, be sure there is 6 feet* of space between you and others. Wear a face mask, and try to avoid touching surfaces with your hands. Wash your hands or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when you disembark. Take the stairs when possible.



*Cleveland Clinic recommends maintaining 6 feet of distance between yourself and others. Other authorities may make different recommendations in certain circumstances. For the most recent recommendations, please visit www.cdc.gov.

Communicating with Family and Friends



Communicating with Family and Friends

Social and physical distancing remain important ways to reduce the spread of coronavirus. As a result, the ways we communicate with our extended family and friends have changed. Many people are feeling lonely or worried, and it is very important to maintain our social connections.

Find creative ways to strengthen bonds

- › Call your loved ones regularly.
- › Use social media and video calls to check in on family and friends.
- › Ask children to help develop ideas: they can write and read stories to their grandparents, or play board games with cousins using video calls.
- › Consider using a video platform for your next dinner party.
- › Start a virtual book club.
- › Don't forget low-tech options, like postcards and handwritten letters to help people in your circle stay connected.

How to Communicate Clearly While Wearing a Mask

Wearing face masks in public spaces is one new behavior we have adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Non-valved, multilayer face masks, when worn properly (i.e., over the nose, mouth and chin), help reduce the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. But they can also reduce our ability to communicate effectively with others by muffling our words or covering facial cues. These factors, in addition to social distancing, make wearing face masks particularly challenging for some individuals.

Below are some tips you can use to improve your communication with others when wearing face masks.



Speak slowly and clearly.

Carefully emphasize the beginnings and end of words.



Face each other.

Engage in eye contact with the individual(s) to whom you are speaking.



Clarify understanding.

Ask the other person to say what they heard. Repeat or rephrase as necessary.



Use technology.

Try a speech-to-text app.



Wear the right mask.

If communicating with someone who has hearing loss or is deaf, consider wearing a clear mask to allow for lipreading. If a clear mask is not available, try written communication, closed captioning and decreasing background noise.



Host a virtual event instead.

Using a computer or mobile device to participate allows you to control the volume and read others' lips on the screen.



Have your hearing checked.

Visit an audiologist to make sure that changes to your hearing aren't contributing to your difficulty hearing with masks.



Tweak your hearing device.

Ask your audiologist to create a "mask" program that adjusts the volume for hearing mid- to high-level pitches.

Special considerations for teens and young adults

As the coronavirus crisis continues, teens and young adults are feeling distraught about the things they are missing. Proms, graduations, first jobs, birthday parties, driver's education classes and sports seasons may have been canceled. Some of these activities may seem frivolous, but others are important milestones for teens making the difficult transition into adulthood.

Here are seven strategies to help your teen or young adult deal with these disappointments:

- 1. Remind them they are doing something significant.** Kids can struggle to grasp the threat of coronavirus. They may think that social distancing is an overreaction. Help them understand that by staying home, they're playing an important part in flattening the curve. They're decreasing the risk of contracting the virus or spreading it to others. Emphasize that they are making a difference by staying home.
- 2. Acknowledge that it's hard.** It might be tempting to point out that missing one dance or track season isn't the end of the world. But for teens, those aren't just fun events. They are important milestones that they may have been looking forward to for months or years. Let them know it is okay to feel disappointment and to grieve.
- 3. Ask questions.** Parents often go straight into problem-solving mode. Unfortunately, coronavirus and quarantines aren't problems you can fix. And teens aren't necessarily looking for answers – sometimes they're looking for a safe place to share their feelings.
- 4. Find creative ways to connect.** Most teens are tech-savvy, so connecting with their friends via text and video chat probably comes naturally. Allow them to use their devices for staying in touch with family and friends with appropriate parental controls and privacy settings in place. Look for ways to connect with the activities they're missing, like playing catch in the backyard.

- 5. Look for silver linings.** School, sports, jobs, friends, homework – modern teens are often overscheduled. This could be a time to explore other interests, like learning to cook or training the dog.
- 6. Encourage daily exercise.** Regular activity is important for a healthy body, but it's also a great stress-reliever and a natural mood booster. Now more than ever, encourage your teen to get up and move.
- 7. Practice coping skills.** This is a great time to reflect on coping skills that have been helpful in the past and to try new strategies to manage stress. Do they find peace from journaling? Making art? Listening to music? Help them identify their coping activities, then make sure they have what they need to do those things.

Watch for signs of depression and anxiety, including:

- › Anger or irritability.
- › Inability to concentrate.
- › Feeling tired or low energy.
- › Withdrawal from friends and family.
- › Significant changes to sleep or appetite.
- › Feelings of worthlessness or hopelessness.
- › Loss of enjoyment of things they used to enjoy.
- › Thinking or talking about death, suicide or self-harm.
- › Unexplained pains, headaches or stomach problems.
- › Lack of motivation to do things they're usually interested in.
- › Difficulty concentrating, remembering things or making decisions.

Holidays and Special Occasions

“On special occasions, it may be tempting to let your guard down as we all long for comfort and closeness from our loved ones. However, even though our hearts may call out for a hug, stay vigilant and send an ‘air hug.’ More than ever, it is so important that we all do our part to keep those around us safe and healthy.

Non-traditional virtual holiday celebrations with friends and family can offer a new and creative way to engage with those we love. Throughout the past several months, my family has connected with the people close to us through various virtual platforms and it’s been a fun and unique way to communicate and interact.”

– *K. Kelly Hancock, DNP, RN,
Chief Caregiver Officer, Cleveland Clinic*

Holidays and Special Occasions

Celebrating holidays is an important part of our culture. From birthdays to weddings to seasonal and religious occasions, holidays are special ways that we mark the passing of time and honor our traditions with the people we care about. However, amid a pandemic, holidays will need to look much different than they have in the past. As you begin to plan for a holiday or special occasion, the CDC recommends postponing travel, and avoiding nonessential indoor spaces and crowded outdoor spaces. Additional holiday considerations include:

- › **Vaccination.** If you're fully vaccinated from COVID-19, you can have small, indoor visits with others who are fully vaccinated. You can also then have small gatherings with others from a single household who are not vaccinated and have a low-risk for developing severe COVID-19 disease. You should still continue to wear masks and physically distance in public spaces even if you are vaccinated.
- › **Levels of COVID-19 in your community.** Higher levels of COVID-19 cases and the amount of community spread where you wish to gather – as well as where your guests are coming from – increase the risk of infection spread at your event.
- › **Location.** When selecting a venue for your celebration, remember that outdoor gatherings pose less risk of virus spread than indoor gatherings. If the weather or other circumstances makes an outdoor gathering impossible, increase the ventilation in the room by opening doors or windows and wear non-valved, multilayer face masks.
- › **Duration.** Longer gatherings pose more risk than shorter ones.
- › **The number of attendees.** The CDC recommends limiting the number of attendees as much as possible. While the CDC does not recommend a specific limit on the number of people who can attend a gathering, many local governments have placed limits in the pandemic. Outside of those



regulations, the size of a gathering should be based on your ability to limit contact between attendees (i.e., physical distancing should be maintained) and the risk of spread between attendees.

- › **The behavior of your attendees before the gathering.** People who have adhered to social distancing, mask wearing, hand washing and other preventive precautions pose less risk than people who have not taken these preventive measures.
- › **The conduct of guests during your gathering.** Attendees should come prepared to wear masks that cover their nose, mouth and chin; to maintain physical distance; and to wash their hands frequently. It's a good idea to communicate this in advance.

Do NOT attend in-person holiday gatherings if you or anyone in your household:

- › Has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and have not yet met the CDC's criteria for when it is safe to be around others.
- › Has symptoms of COVID-19 (see page 29 in this guide for more information).
- › Has been tested for COVID-19 but has not yet received the results.
- › Has been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days.
- › Is at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19 infection.

If you do opt to host or attend an in-person gathering, here are a few tips to help reduce the risk of infection spread:

- › Remind guests to stay home if they are sick or have been exposed to someone who was diagnosed with COVID-19 in the last 14 days.
- › Hold the event outside if possible. If not, consider opening windows.
- › Practice physical distancing and limit close contact. Avoid gestures that promote close contact, including shaking hands, giving hugs and bumping elbows. Wave and verbally greet others instead.
- › Arrange seating areas to reinforce physical distancing. Only people from the same household should be grouped together and do not need to be 6 feet* apart.
- › Ensure an adequate supply of items to help prevent the spread of respiratory viruses, including extra clean masks, hand soap and hand sanitizer.
- › Use single-use, disposable paper towels to dry hands after hand washing with soap and water.
- › Wear a mask at all times when around people outside your household.
- › Limit contact with commonly touched surfaces and shared items (e.g., faucets, door knobs, trash bins, serving utensils).

*The CDC defines exposure as being in close contact (within 6 feet of an infected individual) for a total of 15 minutes or more. For the most recent recommendations, please visit www.cdc.gov.

- › Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and avoid touching your face. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.
- › Avoid singing and shouting.
- › Take care around food and beverages. While there is no evidence to suggest that handling food or eating is associated directly with the spread of COVID-19, it is possible that someone can get infected by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose or eyes. Take preventive measures, including:
 - Ensure that everyone washes their hands before and after preparing, serving and consuming food.
 - Consider asking people to bring food and drinks for those in their own household.
 - Limit the number of people in areas where food is being prepared and served.
 - Designate one person to serve the food, ensuring that they wash their hands beforehand and afterward.
 - Avoid shareable items, such as buffet-style food, bottles of salad dressing or condiments and drink stations. Serve single-serve, prepackaged grab-and-go food and drink options whenever possible.

Virtual celebrations

Virtual celebrations can be meaningful, enjoyable and safe alternatives to in-person gatherings for holidays and special occasions. Whether you share a meal, play games, chat with your loved ones or watch a movie together, these virtual events take a different sort of planning.

- › Ensure that everyone has a device with high-speed internet access.
- › Select a platform that supports video calls.
- › Hold a low-stakes practice session to allow for technical troubleshooting. Be patient, especially with individuals who may not be adept with video calls.



- › Prep the location, checking to see if you can be seen in the camera and that your voice is picked up by the microphone.
- › Have a few conversation starters prepared to keep the interaction flowing and encourage everyone to participate.

Travel Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic



Travel Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic

We've been cooped up a long time. Many people are eager to get back to business and leisure travel; however, travel increases your chance of getting or spreading COVID-19. If you must travel, there are certain steps you can take to protect yourself and others.

- › Do not travel if you have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days. If you are not fully vaccinated and have had close contact* with an individual who is diagnosed with COVID-19, avoid travel and quarantine as recommended by the CDC.
- › Follow state and local travel restrictions and recommendations prior to and after travel, including testing, stay-at-home orders and quarantine requirements.
- › Be flexible, as recommendations and policies may change during your trip.
- › If stopping at a hotel or restaurant, check its prevention practices before you go.
- › Wash hands frequently using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- › Bring extra supplies (i.e., face masks, disinfecting wipes and alcohol-based hand sanitizers).
- › Wear face masks in public spaces, including airplanes, buses, taxis, lobbies, hallways, staircases and elevators.
- › As much as possible, limit close interactions with those outside your household.
- › Avoid crowded places as much as possible. Keep 6 feet** of distance between yourself and others.
- › Use contactless options whenever possible (e.g., for payment, checking into and out of hotels).
- › Avoid contact with anyone who is sick.

*The CDC defines exposure as being in close contact (within 6 feet of an infected individual) for a total of 15 minutes or more. For the most recent recommendations, please visit www.cdc.gov.

**Cleveland Clinic recommends maintaining 6 feet of distance between yourself and others. Other authorities may make different recommendations in certain circumstances.

Wellbeing and Resiliency

“Be kind to yourself. You aren’t in this alone. There’s strength in numbers and it is important to reach out and connect with others, to express how you are feeling. Also, it is important to have some sort of outlet: go for a walk, get some exercise, practice yoga, work in your garden or take up a new hobby. Now more than ever we need to find new ways of relieving stress and staying positive.”

– *K. Kelly Hancock, DNP, RN,
Chief Caregiver Officer, Cleveland Clinic*

“Balance is so hard right now. There is just so much information coming at us. It’s hard to step away from current events, but it’s important to set aside at least a small amount of time during your day to take a deep breath, focus on yourself and decompress. Take a shower or bath, take the dog for a walk, do some mindfulness exercises to redirect your attention away from the stress and constant bombardment of information. We need to disconnect from time to time so we can reconnect in a more thoughtful way.”

– *Kerry Major, MSN, RN,
Florida Regional Chief Nursing Officer,
Cleveland Clinic Florida*



Wellbeing and Resiliency

The COVID-19 pandemic has been an unprecedented event, disrupting our way of life and causing increased stress and anxiety for people everywhere. Information is rapidly changing and can be confusing, even scary. While some people may successfully manage their anxiety levels, the ongoing situation can be overwhelming for everyone.

According to the CDC, stressors associated with 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.

Wellbeing and Resiliency

Managing stress

Following these steps to manage stress can go a long way to help you and your family cope with the ever-changing environment. Encourage individuals who seem unable to manage the increased levels of stress and anxiety to explore available community resources.



Exercise regularly. Aerobic exercise (e.g., walking, running, hiking or playing with your kids/pets), can help release endorphins (natural substances that help you feel better and maintain a positive attitude).



Maintain a healthy diet. Stress can adversely affect your eating habits and your metabolism. The best way to combat stress or emotional eating is to be mindful of what triggers stress eating and to be ready to fight the urge.



Connect with others. Fear and isolation can lead to depression and anxiety. Reach out to family members, friends and colleagues regularly via phone, text, FaceTime or other virtual platforms.



Take a break. While it's important to stay informed of the latest news and developments, the evolving nature of the news can get overwhelming. Find a balance of exposure to news that works for you. Whenever reasonably possible, disconnect physically and mentally.



Get enough sleep. It's especially important that individuals get the recommended amount of sleep to help them stay focused on work and on managing the stress the current outbreak can bring. Experts recommend avoiding alcohol and stimulants like caffeine and nicotine before bed.

Resilience

We have all experienced significant change and we know that some changes may be particularly difficult and stressful. Resilience is the characteristic that we all possess to some degree, to adapt to even the most significant changes. Resilience is the ability to adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.

By working on developing resilience, we “bounce back” from difficult experiences. Research shows that resilience is ordinary, not extraordinary. People commonly demonstrate resilience and are able to increase their tendency to be resilient by practicing a set of behaviors, thinking certain thoughts and demonstrating specific actions.

Resilience starts with a sense of optimism and focusing on acknowledging that the change is not overwhelming, but rather is a challenge to be met. Resilient people don't let negative thoughts or events derail their efforts. They don't dwell on the negative or view themselves as victims. Resilient people do not spend time and energy on things they can't control. They are confident that they can survive; and optimistic that they may even thrive during change.

- › **Spend your time and energy FOCUSED on things you can control.** Have a focused plan and spend energy on taking actions that help you and your team move toward the future. Resilient people are committed and confident in their goals and actions to move themselves and their team forward.
- › **BELIEVE in yourself.** You know you will eventually succeed, the change will be managed and implemented, and a new normal will prevail. Because of this belief, resilient people have courage to make tough decisions, to face difficult challenges, and to deliver unpopular news. They are able to take risks to move forward and will arrive at a better tomorrow.
- › **CHOOSE YOUR RESPONSE to change.** Even in stressful situations, avoid being negative or panicked and instead opt for calm and logic. This means you need the awareness and ability to manage strong feelings and emotions, your own as well as those of others.
- › **ORGANIZE by having a structured approach to managing ambiguity.** Thoughtfully set and explain realistic plans and priorities and develop specific action steps to carry them out. Organize your day to demonstrate your focused commitment to your plan. Practice assessing the risks about the change by listing all the pros and cons you can think of. Discuss with a trusted friend to identify obstacles of which you may not be aware.
- › **Commit to being FLEXIBLE.** Accept that change is part of living. Your plan or goals may no longer be relevant or achievable as a result of things outside your control. Accept that fact and focus on what you can do. Accepting circumstances that cannot be changed can help you focus on where you can take action.
- › **Be PROACTIVE and ENGAGE in the change** as opposed to simply defending it. Apply lessons you have learned from past experiences and incorporate them in your plan.

Recognizing Symptoms

It is important to be educated about the symptoms of COVID-19. These resources will help you recognize symptoms.

What Symptoms Should I Be Watching For?

Patients with confirmed infection with COVID-19 reported these symptoms (as of **March 23, 2021**):



Fever.



Chills.



Cough.



**Shortness of breath
or difficulty breathing.**



Diarrhea.



**Nausea or
vomiting.**



**Muscle or
body aches.**



**Congestion or
runny nose.**



Headache.



Fatigue.



**New loss of
taste or smell.**



Sore throat.

This list does not include all possible symptoms. Children have similar symptoms to adults and generally have mild illness.

Symptoms can range in severity from very mild to severe. In about 80% of patients, COVID-19 causes only mild symptoms. For an up-to-date list of symptoms, please consult the CDC's website.

Please visit clevelandclinic.org for more information. Our healthcare providers are **online** and ready to help.

When Someone in Your Home Has Coronavirus

“Not everyone who has coronavirus will require hospitalization. Some people will develop mild symptoms that can be managed at home. In this case, maintaining nutrition and hydration, getting plenty of rest and staying in contact with your healthcare provider – perhaps through telehealth – will be critical. Hand hygiene becomes even more important in this case. Some people may prefer to seek an alternate place to stay. Regardless, it’s important that medical and social supports are in place for the patient and their family.”

– K. Kelly Hancock, DNP, RN,
Chief Caregiver Officer, Cleveland Clinic

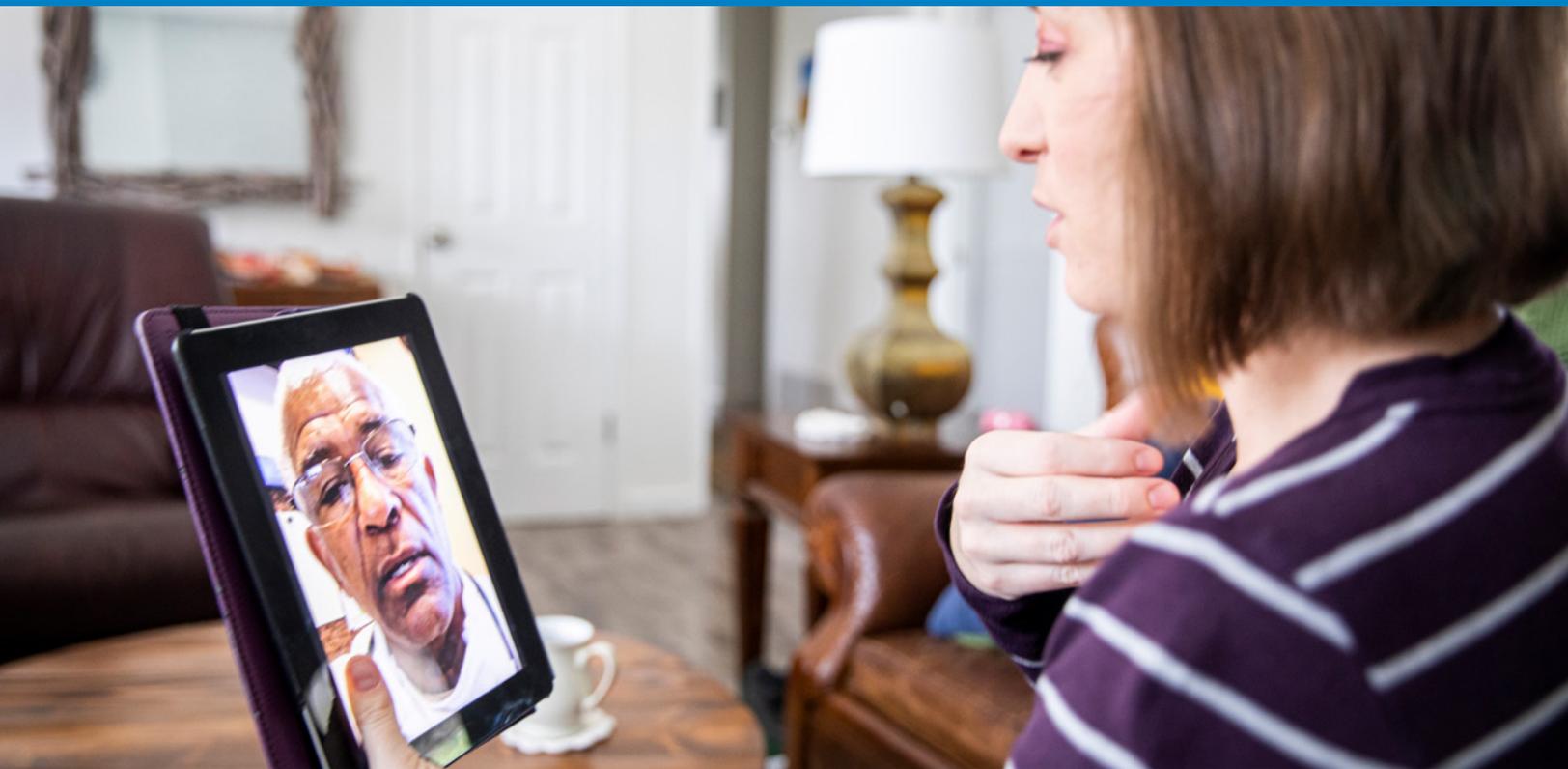


When Someone in Your Home Has Coronavirus

Coronavirus symptoms can range from mild to very serious. It's important to understand that not all cases require urgent medical attention. Most people can monitor their symptoms and manage them through over-the-counter medications, drinking plenty of fluids and rest.

When you're infected with coronavirus, your body has two options:

- 1. You may have a mild-to-moderate reaction** requiring isolation for 14 days, usually at home, and may not require any special treatment. However, it's critically important that you stay home and away from other people during this time. Also remember that things can change quickly.
- 2. You may have a severe reaction**, which can include shortness of breath, tightness in the chest, coughing up thick mucus, loss of appetite, chills and sweating. If you have a severe reaction to coronavirus, you may end up hospitalized. It can lead to pneumonia, respiratory failure, sepsis and at worst, death. According to the World Health Organization, about 1 in 5 people will have a severe reaction. Older adults and those with chronic or underlying conditions (like diabetes or lung or heart disease) are more likely to have this type of reaction.



If you or someone in your household has been diagnosed with coronavirus, take the following steps:

- › **Isolate the symptomatic individual.** Choose one room in the home (with its own bathroom if possible) that can be used to separate the sick household member(s) from others. If you have to share a space, open windows to increase air circulation and wear face masks. Although risk of spread to and through pets is low, the CDC recommends treating pets as you would other family members. According to the CDC, infected individuals can be around others after:
 - 10 days since symptoms first appeared **AND**
 - 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **AND**
 - other symptoms are improving
- › **Trace and inform recent contacts.** Consider who else may have come into contact with the symptomatic person, and let them know that they may have been exposed. Known contacts that have not yet been fully vaccinated should quarantine (i.e., stay at home) for an appropriate time from the date of exposure based on local guidance. This is typically 14 days, but can vary with testing and concerns around variant strains.
- › **Avoid having visitors to the home.**
- › **Even if caregivers and household members do not develop symptoms, individuals who are not fully vaccinated should stay at home** for an appropriate time from the date of exposure based on local guidance. This is typically 14 days, but can vary with testing and concerns around variant strains.
- › **Watch for symptoms.** Caregivers should stay home and watch for COVID-19 symptoms while caring for someone who is sick.

- › **Wear face masks.** Both the individual with COVID-19 and any caregiver who enters the room should wear non-valved, multilayer face masks.
- › **Wash your hands often** using soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water aren't readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. Wear gloves when you touch or come into contact with the ill individual's bodily fluids. Dispose of gloves in a lined trash can as soon as possible to avoid cross-contamination and wash your hands immediately.
- › **Eat in separate rooms.** Wash dishes with soap and hot water or in the dishwasher.
- › **Avoid sharing items,** such as bedding, towels, dishes and utensils and electronics with sick individual.
- › **Ensure you have medications and medical supplies.** Be sure you have a working thermometer, tissues, toilet paper and any over-the-counter medications you might need. Pain relievers like acetaminophen or ibuprofen can relieve minor aches and pains. Cough suppressants or expectorants may also be recommended, but it's best to get specific advice regarding medications from your healthcare provider.

When to seek emergency care

Seek emergency care immediately if you see any of the following warning signs:

- › Trouble breathing
- › Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- › New confusion
- › Inability to wake or stay awake
- › Bluish lips or face

When you call 911, let the dispatcher know you are seeking care for someone who has or may have coronavirus.

Call your doctor if you see other severe or concerning symptoms.



- › **Ensure the ill individual drinks plenty of fluids and gets rest.**
- › **Watch for warning signs.** Keep the doctor's phone number on hand, and call if the person keeps getting sicker. In case of medical emergencies, call 911 and tell the dispatcher you are seeking care for someone who has or may have coronavirus.
- › **Take care when washing and drying laundry.** Wear disposable gloves when handling dirty laundry. Wash items on the warmest water setting, according to label instructions. Remove gloves and wash hands right away. Then, dry the laundry completely, on hot if possible. Wash hands after transferring clothes from washer to dryer. Clean and disinfect laundry hampers, then wash hands again.
- › **Used a lined trash can that is dedicated to the person who is sick.** Wear gloves when removing garbage bags and handling trash. Place the used gloves in a lined trash can and wash your hands afterward.
- › **Clean and disinfect surfaces thought to be contaminated,** and all frequently touched surfaces, with EPA-approved disinfectants. If someone in your home is in quarantine, it is important to disinfect these surfaces at least three times per day.
- › **COVID-19 tip:** When selecting a disinfectant to help prevent the spread of COVID-19, reference the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's List N, a list of approved disinfectants that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

About Our Nurses



K. Kelly Hancock, DNP, RN, NE-BC, FAAN, is Chief Caregiver Officer for Cleveland Clinic health system. For more than 25 years, Hancock has served Cleveland Clinic health system, its patients and communities. Hancock

obtained her DNP from Chamberlain College of Nursing and MSN from the Breen School of Nursing at Ursuline College in Pepper Pike, Ohio. She is a board-certified Nurse Executive through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC), a member of the American Organization of Nurse Executives, the American Association of Critical-Care Nurses, and the Honor Society of Nursing - Sigma Theta Tau International. Hancock became a member of the Fellows of the American Academy of Nursing in 2019, was awarded Crain's Cleveland Business' Notable Women in Healthcare in 2018, the Sones/Folvaro for Excellence in Nursing Collaboration in 2017, Distinguished Alumnae Award from Ursuline College in 2013, the ANCC Circle of Excellence Award in 2012, and the 2010 Maria and Sam Miller Professional Excellence Nurse of the Year Award. She is also a recipient of the "Bruce Hubbard Stewart Fellow Award" and received "The Abbie Porter Leadership Award" in 2002 and 2009, which highlights excellence in nursing leadership.



Kerry A. Major, MSN, RN, NE-BC, is Florida Regional Chief Nursing Officer and Weston Hospital Chief Nursing Officer for Cleveland Clinic Florida. Major is a nursing advocate through-and-through. She feels it is

imperative that the value of nursing is present and understood throughout the many disciplines within the healthcare industry. Major began her professional career in nursing while living in Hong Kong in 1991, and within two years accepted a position at Mount Sinai Medical Center in Miami Beach where she held several positions, including charge nurse, assistant nurse manager and clinical director. A strong leader with demonstrated performance in strategic and organizational management, human resource and financial management, Major works to devise resourceful methods and practices designed to advance the nursing profession. In 2009, Major was honored with the Nursing Spectrum Excellence Award for Advancing and Leading the Profession.

The response to the COVID-19 pandemic is continuously evolving as we learn more about the virus and the best techniques to address the associated risks. The Clorox Company has contributed its expertise to the sections in this guide that concern cleaning and disinfecting. All other guidelines were developed through the expertise of Cleveland Clinic. Cleveland Clinic's materials are based on currently available data and guidelines from the CDC and other resources as of **March 23, 2021**. This guidance may change from time to time and should be used only as a general reference. Individuals are solely responsible for determining the best practices to deploy within their households.

Please visit clevelandclinic.org/coronavirus for the latest updates or to request additional information.

About Cleveland Clinic

Cleveland Clinic is a nonprofit, multi-specialty academic medical center that integrates clinical and hospital care with research and education. Cleveland Clinic was founded in 1921 by four renowned physicians with a vision of providing outstanding patient care based upon the principles of cooperation, compassion and innovation. Today, Cleveland Clinic is one of the largest and most respected hospitals in the country. *U.S. News & World Report* consistently names Cleveland Clinic as one of the nation's best hospitals in its annual "America's Best Hospitals" survey. Each year thousands of patients travel to Cleveland Clinic from every state in the nation and more than 180 countries around the world.

About The Clorox Company

The Clorox Company is a leading multinational manufacturer and marketer of consumer and professional products. Founded in 1913, Clorox has a century-long legacy in health and wellness, starting with its namesake bleach and evolving to include other products in its portfolio that can make a meaningful difference in people's lives. They include some of the most trusted and recognized consumer brand names, such as Clorox® cleaning and disinfecting products; Brita® water-filtration products; Burt's Bees® natural personal care products; RenewLife® digestive health products; and Rainbow Light®, Natural Vitality™ and NeoCell® dietary supplements. The company also markets industry-leading products and technologies for professional customers, including those sold under the CloroxPro™ and Clorox Healthcare® brand names.

For more information about how to cope
with the COVID-19 pandemic,
visit clevelandclinic.org/copingwithcovid19.

