WHAT IS COVID-19 (CORONAVIRUS)?

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A disease that causes fever, cough, and shortness of breath, and may lead to more serious illness, such as pneumonia.

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

- The disease tends to have a more serious effect on older adults, but all people can become infected and spread it to more vulnerable populations such as older adults and people with serious chronic medical conditions (heart disease, diabetes, lung disease, etc.)
- The disease spreads at an exponential rate, meaning that people get infected at an increasingly fast rate if you do not help to prevent the spread.
- If too many people get infected, there are not enough hospital beds, ventilators, and medical personnel to help everyone.

HOW COVID-19 SPREADS

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

- The virus mainly spreads from person-to-person.
- The virus is spread between people who are in close contact with one another (within 2 meters).
- It spreads when droplets from an infected person's sneeze or cough enter another person via the nose, mouth, and possibly eyes.
- Individuals with COVID-19 are contagious for at least 2 weeks and may not feel symptoms right away. There is no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

SOCIAL DISTANCING

The goal of social distancing is to slow the spread of the virus and reduce the strain on our health care systems. This will give communities more time to prepare appropriately.

- Avoid contact with people who are sick.
- Put distance between yourself and other people. This includes neighbors, friends, and colleagues.
- Be very careful to keep distance and not spread the disease to people who are at higher risk (aged 60+, or and those with underlying health conditions, such as hypertension, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer).
- Avoid visiting family and friends, but stay connected through phone, video, or social media.
- Avoid social gatherings, bars, and restaurants. Reduce trips to stores. If you need to go to the store, try going during a time that is less crowded and wash your hands thoroughly before and after your trip.
- Avoid take-out meals and prepare food at home, if possible.
- Exercise and take walks/run outside, but maintain at least two meters between you and others.

If you feel symptoms, or may have been exposed:

- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. Call your medical provider before visiting.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow, and throw used tissues in the trash. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wear a facemask if you are sick when you are around other people and before you enter a health care provider's office.
- If you are NOT sick, don't wear a facemask unless you are caring for someone who is sick. Facemasks should be saved for caregivers and medical personnel.

HAND WASHING

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- Soap and water are the most effective sanitizers, but if they are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
  Use warm water for handwashing when possible.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

CLEAN AND DISINFECT

Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

To disinfect:
- Dilute household bleach: To make a bleach solution, mix 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per gallon of water OR 80mls to 8 liters.
- Alcohol solutions: Ensure solution is at least 70% alcohol.