

COVID-19 How to Protect Yourself – 3.1.21 1000

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The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus

Know how COVID-19 spreads:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others

- Wear a mask in public settings and when around people, especially when other social distancing measures are difficult to maintain.
- Wear a mask that is well-fitting, without gaps, covers the mouth and nose, and secured to prevent microorganisms from entering and exiting around the mask.
- When using a mask, keep it on your face. The most susceptible time for microorganisms to spread is when you move your mask on and off your face.
- Always wear a mask except when eating, drinking or in a private office, alone, with the door closed.

Eating and drinking in shared or public spaces:

- When eating and drinking, take the following steps to remove mask:
 - Perform hand hygiene with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
 - Remove the face mask and place it on a clean surface such as a paper towel or paper bag
 - Perform hand hygiene with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub before eating or drinking
- After eating or drinking, take the following steps to replace the mask:
 - Perform hand hygiene with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
 - Put on face mask immediately after eating or drinking, taking care to avoid touching face or eyes
 - Perform hand hygiene with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub
- If in cafeteria, vending rooms, break rooms, shared workspaces, etc. follow social distancing rules when eating or drinking.

Clean your hands often:

- 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.
- If soap and water 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.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid close contact

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
 - Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.
 - The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.
- Maintain social distancing, especially during meal times in community spaces

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.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them followed by hospital-approved, EPA-registered disinfectant with appropriate contact time.
- Disinfect shared equipment between team members (e.g. Voalte phone, computer, etc.)

Wear eye protection:

- Wear eye protection that covers the front and sides of your face when required by hospital guidelines.
- Perform hand hygiene before donning and doffing eye protection.
- When removed, disinfect eye protection with hospital-approved disinfectant.
- Do not touch the outside of your eye protection or pull up over your head. Infection Prevention recommends against wearing eye protection on top of your head.

Select the proper respirator

- Get fit-tested if your role requires the use of an N95 respirator to ensure proper fit.
- Select the N95 respirator that you were fit-tested for.
 - If model and size of N95 respirator that you were fitted for is not available, wear a positive air-purifying respirator (PAPR) where available
 - If you have not yet been fit tested, use a universal 3M 9205+ N95 respirator with proper seal check until fit tested can be completed.
- Conduct seal check every time donning the N-95. If seal check fails, discard and obtain new one, or wear a PAPR.
- Do not touch the outside of your mask or pull your mask up and down over your chin or head.
- When mask needs to be removed, perform hand hygiene and place your mask in a safe storage area.

Stay home if you're sick:

- Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
- Take your temperature if symptoms develop.
 - Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.
- Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care.

Cover coughs and sneezes:

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Additional tips:

- Get the COVID-19 vaccine when available.
- After a shift, wash your clothes with standard laundry soap in your household washing machine and completely dry your clothes in your household dryer to eliminate the virus. The heat from a household dryer is high enough to eliminate the contaminants.
- Surgical scrubs provided by the hospital are for team members working procedural areas.
- Follow “Bare-below-the-elbow” standards. Removal of jewelry and watch is preferred.
- Any form of artificial nails (including dip) is strictly prohibited for team members who provide direct patient care.
- Wearing a clinical white coat is not currently recommended, unless laundered daily.
- Headwear is acceptable, as defined in PPE from Home document [here](#)

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

https://spectrumhealth.sharepoint.com/:b:/r/sites/safety-central/Shared%20Documents/Safety-Learning-COVID-Precautions-092320_fin--1-84642.pdf?csf=1&web=1&e=2qwYBE

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