

What YOU need to know today about coronavirus **COVID-19 in **FIVE EASY STEPS****

There is no cure for this virus that spreads like the common cold through respiratory droplets from infected persons, entering your eyes, nose or mouth either directly when someone coughs or sneezes, or via your own hands when you touch something with the virus on it and then touch your own face.

REDUCE YOUR RISK OF GETTING OR SPREADING

1. STRONG IMMUNE SYSTEM

- Vitamin C and plenty of fruits and vegetables
- Daily exercise (aim for 30-60 mins of activity as able)
- Sleep and rest (8 hours a night, ideally)
- Fresh air and outside time (open windows and go outside; virus thrives indoors on surfaces)
- Laugh and “chill out” every day (a good belly laugh decreases stress hormones that “run down” your immune system)
- Avoid smoking (any substances) and alcohol (even small amounts of alcohol decrease robustness of your immune system)
- Ensure your vaccinations are UP TO DATE

2. AVOID SICK PEOPLE (Social Distancing)

- Keep TWO MAGIC METERS (6 feet) between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing, has a fever or has difficulty breathing
- Infected people may have few or no symptoms, or think they have a cold or flu; anyone could be a carrier so keep your distance
- Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure, but even in this symptom-free period, a person may be able to transmit the virus, so PRACTICE GOOD (HAND) HYGIENE
- Avoid crowds, gatherings or events

3. PRACTICE GOOD (HAND) HYGIENE

Wash! Your! Hands! Wash them for at least 20 seconds each time. Wash them before you prepare food, eat, after using the bathroom, after you cough or sneeze, and if you are caring for sick people. If you don't have soap and water, use a sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Do not touch your eyes, nose and mouth.

Cover your cough or sneeze with your elbow, or cough/sneeze into a tissue and throw it in the trash.

Clean frequently touched objects and surfaces with a disinfecting spray or wipe. **CLEAN YOUR PHONE!**

4. STAY HOME IF YOU ARE SICK

And if you are asked to quarantine, or are looking after someone in quarantine, use dedicated towels, utensils, bedding, washroom (if possible), to avoid contaminating the household and to protect others. Use gloves and a mask when cleaning up after an infected person. Wash linens in hot water and avoid leaving objects that have "viral droplets" lying around. The virus can survive on inanimate surfaces for potentially several days. *(There is specific information on the Public Health Website for [how to manage home quarantining.](#))*

5. DIAGNOSING AND MANAGING COVID-19

(Coronavirus infections are diagnosed by a healthcare provider based on symptoms and may be confirmed through laboratory tests.)

Are you back from a trip outside Canada?

You are asked to **self-isolate** for 14 days, as per Government of Canada (see attached Self-Isolation instructions). Even if you develop mild symptoms, you unlikely need to be tested because self-isolation is enough to protect others.

If you develop flu-like symptoms FEVER (> 38 deg Celsius), and/or NEW ONSET/WORSENING COUGH or DIFFICULTY BREATHING within 14 days, continue to isolate yourself and call a public health authority or health care professional. (You could be considered for testing, according to current recommendations.)

Whether or not you have traveled, if you are sick enough to call an ambulance (911), you **MUST ADVISE HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS** about **TRAVEL or RISK FACTORS** (close or confirmed contact with a probable case of COVID-19) ahead of their arrival so they can arrange swift and safe transport.

If you are not severely ill but you need to see a doctor or get advice about whether you should be tested, call:

PUBLIC HEALTH UNIT AT 1-866-888-4577 EXT 5020

TELEHEALTH ONTARIO AT 1-866-797-0000

YOUR FAMILY PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE

We ask that you avoid going to the hospital or other health care setting if you have mild symptoms; emergency departments must be kept for people who are truly unwell and need urgent medical care. Use judgement and do not visit the emergency department simply because you have a risk factor (and are otherwise feeling well).

Non-essential medical appointments will be rescheduled.

You can schedule appointments with your family physician or health care provider to occur over the phone.

WHAT IF I THINK I HAVE THE VIRUS BUT SYMPTOMS ARE MILD?

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Get rest and sleep as much as possible
- Try a humidifier or hot shower to help sore throat & cough
- Self-isolate at home for 14 days (see attached instructions)

WHAT IF I HAVE RISK FACTORS (TRAVEL OR CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WHO HAS TRAVELED OR IS UNWELL) BUT I HAVE NO SYMPTOMS?

- Self-monitor for 14 days after exposure (see attached instructions)
- If you develop symptoms, then self-isolate immediately (see attached instructions)

RESOURCES TO KEEP YOU UP TO DATE ABOUT COVID-19:

www.hhfht.com Haliburton Highlands Family Health Team

<https://www.hkpr.on.ca> Local Public Health Unit

<https://www.who.int/> World Health Organization

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/being-prepared.html> Government of Canada

ADDITIONAL CORONAVIRUS PREPAREDNESS

WHEN DO I NEED TO WEAR A MASK?

*Stock up on **prescription medications, not masks.***

Masks are prioritized for patients with symptoms. If you have a cough then wearing a mask or scarf over your nose and mouth can help prevent the spread of “viral droplets” to others. *(To protect yourself, wash your hands and do not touch your face.)*

You may want to have medications on reserve in case of short supply or if you are quarantined (*e.g. insulin for diabetic patients*). The recommendation is to have two weeks of supplies on hand.

EVERYONE HAS A ROLE TO PLAY in keeping our community healthy and preventing the spread of illness.

You can think about ways to reduce risk such as avoiding non-essential travel, avoiding crowds, having groceries delivered, shopping ONLINE or at less busy times, exercising OUTDOORS, having critical supplies on hand (diapers, feminine hygiene products, fever reducing medicines, detergent and bleach, tissues, toilet paper, soap), refilling prescriptions ahead of time.

Remember, keep your immune system healthy, avoid contact with unwell persons, WASH! YOUR! HANDS!, keep up-to-date with government travel and medical advisements, stay home if you are sick and encourage others to do the same.

PLEASE SEE ATTACHED INSTRUCTION SHEETS “HOW TO SELF MONITOR” AND “HOW TO SELF ISOLATE”