Daily Life & Going Out and Living through a Pandemic “Health Emergency”

**Household Checklist**

**Take every day preventative actions**

* Wash your hands frequently.
* Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
* Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms’ length) from other people.
* Stay home when you are sick.
* Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
* [Clean and disinfect](about:blank) frequently touched objects and surfaces.
* Wear a cloth face cover when you go out in public.
  + Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Prepare for Possible illness

* Consider members of the household who may have an [increased risk for severe illness](about:blank).
* Choose a room in your house that can be used to separate sick household members from others.

**Living in Close Quarters**

This guidance is intended for people living together in close quarters, such as people who share a small apartment, or for people who live in the same household with large or extended families.

[People of any age who have certain underlying medical conditions](about:blank) are at risk for getting COVID-19. Some groups have an [increased risk for severe illness](about:blank) from coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The following information is aimed to help you protect those who are most vulnerable in your household.

**Limit errands**

Family members should leave only when absolutely necessary. [Essential errands](about:blank) include going to the grocery store, pharmacy, or medical appointments that cannot be delayed (e.g., infants or individuals with serious health conditions in need of aid).  
If you must leave the house, please do the following:

* Choose one or two family members who are not at a higher risk to run the essential errands.
* Wear a [cloth face covering](about:blank), avoid crowds, practice social distancing, and follow these recommended [tips for running errands](about:blank).
* If feasible, use forms of transportation that minimize close contact with others (e.g., biking, walking, driving or riding by car either alone or with household members).
* If necessary to use public transportation:
  + Maintain a 6-foot distance from other passengers as much as possible.
  + Avoid touching high-touch surfaces such as handrails, and wash hands or use hand sanitizers as soon as possible after leaving.
  + Follow CDC guidance on how to [protect yourself when using transportation](about:blank).
  + Try to commute during less busy times.
  + [Clean your hands](about:blank) as soon as possible after the trip.
* If necessary to ride in a car with members of different households:
  + Limit close contact and create space between others in the vehicle as possible.
  + Improve air flow in the car by opening the window or placing air conditioning on non-recirculation mode.
* Wash your hands immediately after you return home.
* Maintain as much physical distance as possible with those at higher risk in the home. For example, avoid hugging, kissing, or sharing food or drinks.

**Vulnerable members should avoid caring for children and those who are sick**

Those who are at increased risk for severe illness should avoid [caring for the children](about:blank) in their household, if possible. If people at higher risk must care for the children in their household, **the children in their care should not have contact with individuals outside the household. Members of the household who are at high risk should also avoid taking care of sick people of any age who are sick.**

**Separate a household member who are sick**

Provide a separate bedroom and bathroom for the person who is sick, if possible. If you cannot provide a separate room and bathroom, try to separate them from other household members as much as possible. **Keep people at higher risk separated from anyone who is sick.**

* If possible, have only one person in the household [take care of the person who is sick](about:blank). This caregiver should be someone who is not at higher risk for severe illness and should minimize contact with other people in the household.
  + Identify a different caregiver for other members of the household who require help with cleaning, bathing, or other daily tasks.
* If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other family or household members.
* If you need to share a bedroom with someone who is sick, make sure the room has good air flow.
  + Open the window and turn on a fan to bring in and circulate fresh air if possible.
  + Maintain at least 6 feet between beds if possible.
  + Sleep head to toe.
  + Put a curtain around or place other physical divider (e.g., shower curtain, room screen divider, large cardboard poster board, quilt, or large bedspread) to separate the ill person’s bed.
* If you need to share a bathroom with someone who is sick, the person who is sick should clean and disinfect the frequently touched surfaces in the bathroom after each use. If this is not possible, the person who does the cleaning should:
  + Open outside doors and windows before entering and use ventilating fans to increase air circulation in the area.
  + Wait as long as possible before entering the room to clean and disinfect or to use the bathroom.
* If you are sick, do not help prepare food. Also, eat separately from the family.

**Coping with Stress**

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions, such as social distancing, can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. However, these actions are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19. **Coping with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.**

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can sometimes cause the following:

* Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on.
* Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
* Difficulty sleeping or concentrating.
* Worsening of chronic health problems.
* Worsening of mental health conditions.
* Increased use of [tobacco](about:blank), and/or [alcohol and other substances](about:blank).