

Get Your Family Ready for COVID-19

A COVID-19 outbreak could last for a long time in your community. Public health officials may recommend community actions to keep students and staff healthy, reduce exposures to COVID-19, and slow the spread of the disease. Creating a household plan can help you protect your health and the health of those you love. Base the details of your household plan on the needs and daily routine of your family.

Create a Plan

- ◆ Meet with family members and friends to talk about what you will do when COVID-19 disease comes to your community.
- ◆ Plan ways to take care of household members who are at higher risk for serious complications from COVID-19. Early information suggests older adults and people with chronic medical conditions are more likely to have serious illness.
- ◆ Talk with a healthcare provider about how to monitor for symptoms of COVID-19.
- ◆ Think about local organizations you can contact for information, healthcare, or counseling services, food, or other supplies.
- ◆ Create an emergency contact list for family, friends, healthcare providers, the local health department, employers, schools, and other community resources.

Practice Good Personal Health Habits Plan for Home-based Actions

- ◆ Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ◆ Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- ◆ Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or into the inside of their elbow. Throw away tissue in trash after use.
- ◆ Frequently wash your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer, especially after coughing, blowing your nose, or sneezing into a tissue.
- ◆ Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily (e.g., tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, cabinet handles, land-line and cell phones, keyboards, etc.) using a regular household detergent and water. For disinfection, use a household cleaner that kills coronaviruses.
- ◆ Choose a room in your house to separate sick household members from those who are healthy. If possible, have a separate bathroom for the sick person to use. Clean these rooms as needed, when someone is sick.

Be Prepared for School or Child-Care Closures and Plan for Potential Changes at Work

Prepare for Possible Quarantine or Isolation

- ◆ School dismissals and closures of child-care facilities to slow the spread of infection in the community may become necessary. Learn about your school's plan for continuing education and student meal programs if the school closures occur. If your child attends a college or university, encourage him/her to learn about the school's plan for a COVID-19 outbreak.
- ◆ Learn about your employer's emergency operations plan. Discuss sick-leave policies and telework options for workers who are sick or who need to stay home to care for sick household members. Notify employer as soon as possible if you will need to stay home.
- ◆ Have adequate food, medication, OTCs, cleaning products, pet supplies, etc. at home so you don't have to leave home during self-quarantine or self-isolation.

Put Your Plan into Action

Take Steps to Keep Children Safe During an Outbreak

- ◆ Stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation. Get up-to-date information about local COVID-19 activity from your local public health department. Stay in touch with others by email and phone.
- ◆ Continue to practice good health habits and stay home when sick.
- ◆ Inform your employer if you need to make changes in your work schedule.
- ◆ If your child/children become sick with COVID-19, notify their childcare facility or school. Talk with teachers about classroom assignments and activities they can do from home to keep up with their schoolwork.
- ◆ Keep track of school dismissals in your community. Read or watch local media sources that report school dismissals. If schools are dismissed temporarily, use alternative childcare arrangements, if needed.
- ◆ Discourage children and teens from gathering in other public places while school is dismissed to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in the community.

After a COVID-19 Outbreak in Your Community

Remember, a COVID-19 outbreak could last a long time. The impact on individuals, households, and communities might be great. When public health officials determine the outbreak has ended in your community, take time to improve your household's plan.

- ◆ **Discuss and note lessons learned.** Were your COVID-19 preparedness actions effective at home, school, and work? Talk about problems found in your plan and effective solutions. Identify additional resources needed for you and your household.
- ◆ **Participate in community discussions about emergency planning.** Let others know about what readiness actions worked for you and your household. Maintain communication lines with your community (e.g., social media and email lists). Promote the importance of practicing good personal health habits.
- ◆ **Continue to practice everyday preventative actions.** Stay home when you are sick; cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue; wash your hands often with soap and water; and clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily.
- ◆ **Take care of the emotional health of your household members.** Make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade. Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories about COVID-19. Connect with family and friends. Share your concerns and how you are feeling with others.
- ◆ **Help your child/children cope after the outbreak.** Provide children with opportunities to talk about what they went through or what they think about it. Encourage them to share concerns and ask questions. Because parents, teachers, and other adults see children in different situations, it is important for them to work together to share information about how each child is coping after the outbreak.



For more information related to COVID-19, please contact:

Kate Lange or Kim Showalter at Public Health Solutions, 402-826-3880 or

visit the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) website at: www.cdc.gov