

COVID-19: MESSAGES

LAST UPDATE: MARCH 2022

About the Message Library

People affected by disaster must have access to timely, appropriate and accurate information to help them keep themselves and their families safe and well. They should know their rights, entitlements and be able to give feedback. Responders have a duty to put in place appropriate, systematic and coordinated mechanisms to ensure this.

Our Message Library offers clear, concise and simple messages on a range of topics as templates for you to adapt and use in the context you are working in. These are intended to help you make a quick start on communicating with communities while you further develop mechanisms for on-going dialogue with diverse groups within each community.

For help contextualising and using the messages we recommend you do our e-learning course and read the following technical guidance.

E-learning

<https://kayaconnect.org/course/info.php?id=768>

Guidance

<https://www.cdacnetwork.org/tools-guidance/cdac-message-library-user-guidance>

Disease and transmission of Covid-19

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. The disease spreads mainly through respiratory droplets expelled by someone who is coughing. It is possible to catch it from someone with mild or no symptoms. The time between catching the virus and beginning to have symptoms of the disease range from 1-14 days, most commonly around five days.

Who is affected?

Most people infected with the virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment. However, some will become seriously ill and require medical attention. Older people and those with underlying medical conditions like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, or cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. Anyone can get sick with COVID-19 and become seriously ill or die at any age.

Symptoms of Covid-19

If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance. Follow the directions of your local health authority.

Symptoms are usually mild & gradual. some people don't develop symptoms. Most people recover without needing special treatment. Only 1 in 6 becomes very ill.

People over 60 and people with underlying medical conditions are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.

Play your part against Covid-19

Want to play your part in the fight against COVID-19? Here are 4 things you can do: Wash your hands, keep your distance, know the signs, be kind to people.

Protecting yourself from Covid-19

It is possible to catch COVID-19 from someone who is infected but does not yet feel ill or show symptoms. Wash your hands regularly and keep a 1m distance when possible.

To protect yourself against COVID-19, avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.

Stop the spread: Cover your mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of used tissues immediately and wash hands regularly.

Stay home if you feel unwell. If you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance.

Maintain at least 1 meter/3 foot distance between yourself and other people, particularly if they are coughing or sneezing. Wash hands regularly and thoroughly.

Avoid busy and crowded spaces. If you need to shop for food or other essentials, try to avoid busy hours, keep 1 meter distance and ensure you have fresh air.

Hand washing to prevent Covid-19

Wash your hands thoroughly: Hands touch surfaces & can pick up viruses. Contaminated hands can transfer the virus to your body through your eyes, nose or mouth. To protect yourself and others, wash your hands with alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water as frequently as possible. Wash your hands after coughing or sneezing, when caring for the sick, when preparing food, before eating, after toilet use, after handling animals.

Self-quarantine for Covid-19

If you think you were exposed to someone with COVID-19, you should avoid human contact as much as possible for 14 days, even if you feel healthy. Even if you have mild symptoms e.g. headache, low grade fever (>37.3 C) & slight runny nose, stay home until you recover. Ask for help to get essential supplies.

If you are in or have recently visited (past 14 days) areas where COVID-19 is spreading, stay at home if you begin to feel unwell, until you recover.

Home care for Covid-19

People with suspected or confirmed coronavirus should stay in a separate room from other family members. If not possible, wear a mask and keep 1 meter distance.

For those with suspected or confirmed coronavirus receiving care at home, do not visit public places. Rest, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious food.

Vaccines + treatment for Covid-19

Get vaccinated when it's your turn and follow local guidance. [insert details on how to get vaccinated]

Mask usage against Covid-19

The use of masks is part of a comprehensive package of prevention and control measures to limit the spread of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. [Insert details on current local mask usage]

Older people and Covid-19

Older people are valued and valuable members of our families and communities. But they are at higher risk of the more serious complications of COVID-19.

Older people need to keep in contact with family, friends and neighbours and ask for help with shopping, or picking up medicines or other necessities if needed.

Older people should keep the house stocked with at least two weeks of essential food and supplies, including prescription medicine.

Older people can keep healthy by establishing a routine to keep active and positive. This may include online courses, physical activities, and reading.

People with disability and Covid-19

People with disability may have risks of developing more severe cases of coronavirus because COVID-19 can exacerbate existing health conditions. Prepare your household in case COVID-19 is contracted and inform people you trust on what they should do if you become ill. People with disability can reduce their potential exposure by [insert appropriate local measures].

Mental health during Covid-19

It is normal to feel sad, stressed, confused, scared or angry during a crisis. Talking to people you trust can help. Contact your friends and family. If you must stay at home, maintain a healthy lifestyle - including proper diet, sleep, exercise and social contacts with loved ones.

Don't use smoking, alcohol or other drugs to deal with your emotions. If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health worker or counsellor.

Try to reduce how much you watch, read or listen to news that makes you feel anxious. Seek the latest information only at specific times of the day.

Stay active at home during Covid-19

Be active during the COVID-19 outbreak to maintain your heart health, muscle strength and flexibility. It is good for your mental health too!

Tips to stay active at home during the COVID-19 outbreak: dance to music, skip rope, do some stretching and strength training exercises.

Keeping active every day is good for your body, mind and spirit. And physical activity can improve your sleep, which is also important for good health.

WHO recommends that all healthy adults do 30 minutes/day of physical activity, and children should be active for 1 hour/day.

Quitting tobacco to reduce risk of Covid-19

Smokers have a higher risk of getting coronavirus because they are constantly putting their hands to their lips. Quit today to reduce your risk.

If smokers get coronavirus, they run a greater risk of getting a severe case because their lung function is impaired. Quit today to reduce your risk.

Quick tips to curb your tobacco cravings and help you quit: Delay as long as you can, take 10 deep breaths to relax, drink some water, distract yourself.

Myth busters about Covid-19

People of all ages can be infected by the coronavirus. WHO advises we ALL take steps to protect ourselves from the virus, e.g. cleaning hands regularly. The following measures are NOT effective against the coronavirus: taking a hot bath, drinking alcohol, eating garlic, taking antibiotics.

Violence during Covid-19

If you are experiencing or at risk of domestic violence, speak to supportive family & friends, seek support from a hotline, or seek out local services.

REFERENCES

For more information on this topic, we recommend you read the following references.

World Health Organization (2022). **Coronavirus disease (COVID-19)**
https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus#tab=tab_1

World Health Organization (2021). **Advice for the public**
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

World Health Organization (2022). **Advice for the public: COVID-19 vaccines**
<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/covid-19-vaccines/advice>

World Health Organization (2021). **Questions and answers**
<https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/coronavirus-disease-covid-19>

HELP US KEEP THE LIBRARY UP TO DATE

If you would like to contribute to topic reviews, have found a message that needs greater clarity, or wish to create a new topic, please contact us at info@cdacnetwork.org.