

Protecting Yourself and Preventing the Spread of COVID-19

Things You Need to Know about the Virus

- SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, is predominantly spread person-to-person through respiratory droplets.
 - Every time an infected person exhales, talks, sneezes, or coughs, they release viral particles in their respiratory droplets.
 - People do not have to feel ill to be spreading viral particles.
 - Typical symptoms of COVID-19 include a persistent cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fever, chills, muscle aches, headache, sore throat, and loss of taste and smell.
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Staying Safe at Work and in the Community

- Avoid gatherings and playing sports with people outside your immediate cohort (i.e., family, housemates, work crew).
 - Limit trips to the grocery store, laundromat, and other public places.
 - Wear a cloth face covering to limit the spread of respiratory droplets.
 - Face coverings offer some protection to the wearer, but the main reason is to protect others.
 - Stay 6 feet (or 2 meters) away from others, even when wearing a cloth face covering.
 - Practice good hand hygiene by washing your hands often.
 - Proper handwashing = Wet hands with potable water, apply soap, scrub for 20 seconds, rinse hands thoroughly, and dry with a single-use clean towel. Turn off faucet and open door with towel, then dispose in garbage can.
 - Avoid touching your face, especially your eyes, nose, and mouth.
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Staying Safe in the House

- Socializing with housemates is acceptable, but do not invite others into the house.
 - Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces (e.g., sinks, kitchen appliances, tables, and door knobs).
 - If possible, keep heads of beds 6 feet apart to limit the spread of the virus while sleeping.
 - Divide the room into sections with physical barriers such as sheets strung between beds.
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Staying Safe While Traveling in a Shared Vehicle

- Limit passengers in vehicles to your immediate cohort (i.e. family, housemates, work crew).
 - If it is necessary to travel with others, wear a cloth face covering while in the vehicle and sit as far away from other passengers as possible. Increase air flow by opening windows.
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What to Do If You or a Housemate Get Sick

- Limit contact with others in the house, wear a cloth face covering, and maintain a 6 foot distance.
 - Only use one bathroom.
 - Clean and disinfect common surfaces often to prevent spread from surfaces.
 - If possible, sleep in a separate room from others.
- If the ill person has been going to work, they should notify their supervisor. Then, the supervisor can assess the risk of other employees having had contact with the ill person.

Visit instituteforfoodsafety.cornell.edu/coronavirus-covid-19 for more information. Document updated on June 16, 2020.

