

What You Need to Know to Keep Safe from COVID-19

Some counties are cautiously opening back up for business and many people are confused about what that means for their safety. There are many ways to keep you and your loved ones safe even with the changes to the shelter-in-place orders. Here are a few things you can do to keep yourself safe as restrictions ease.

WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS

Washing your hands is one of the best ways to stop germs from spreading and to protect yourself from infections. To prevent COVID-19 transmission, the key times to wash your hands are the following instances:

- After being in a public place.
- After touching items that may be frequently touched by other people.
- Before touching your face, especially areas like your eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Before preparing food or eating food.¹

HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS PROPERLY

- Wet your hands with clean, running water (hot or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap, lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. A good way to measure this is by singing the ABCs while washing your hands.
- Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.
- Dry your hands with a clean towel or air dry them.¹



HOW TO WEAR A MASK PROPERLY

The CDC recommends wearing face coverings when you go out to public areas where it may be difficult to maintain social distancing guidelines. Below are directions to properly wear a mask:

- Before putting on a mask, wash your hands with soap and water or clean your hands with hand sanitizer.
- Cover your mouth and nose with the mask.
- Make sure there are no gaps between the mask and your face.
- Avoid touching your mask when you're using it (in case you do, wash or clean your hands).
- As soon as the mask is damp, replace it with a new one (do not reuse single-use masks).
- When you remove your mask, remove it from behind, so you do not touch your face or the front of the mask.
- Wash or clean your hands immediately after disposing the mask.²



HOW TO DISINFECT SURFACES

While cleaning removes germs and dirt from surfaces, disinfecting kills germs on surfaces, further lowering the risk of COVID-19 infections. Thus, it is important to disinfect and clean frequently touched areas such as tables, doorknobs, desks, electronics, sinks and faucets.³

Wear disposable gloves to clean and disinfect. Make sure you wash or clean your hands after removing the gloves properly.³

Use EPA-approved products to disinfect surfaces. Alternatively, you can prepare a bleach solution by mixing 5 tablespoons of bleach per gallon of water or 4 teaspoons per quart of water.³ Watch this video to learn how to prepare a bleach solution properly.

HOW TO KEEP A HEALTHY IMMUNE SYSTEM

- **STAY ACTIVE:** Working out is an effective way to boost your immune system. Research has shown that simply raising your body temperature may help kill germs. The CDC recommends 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity.⁵
- **EAT HEALTHY:** Try to indulge in a Mediterranean diet, which is rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and healthy fats (fatty fish, nuts, and olive oil). A Mediterranean diet is high in nutrients such as Vitamin C, zinc and other antioxidants which may reduce inflammation and fight infection.⁵
- **MANAGE YOUR STRESS:** Poor mental health negatively affects your immune system which leads to a spike in stress hormones; stress hormones suppress your immune system.⁵
- **REST:** Sleep deprivation increases stress hormones which, in turn, suppress your immune system. Adults should try to get at least 7 hours of sleep each night.⁵
- **SUPPLEMENTS:** You know your body best, so buy supplements that you may be lacking. For instance, many of us are spending more time indoors so we may be lacking vitamin D. Additionally, try cooking with herbs such as garlic, ginger, rosemary, oregano and turmeric because they have anti-inflammatory properties which enhance your immune system.⁵

ELECTRONICS

People are concerned with how to disinfect their devices such as phones, which may carry more germs than a toilet seat. Below are a couple of guidelines on disinfecting electronic screens:

- Use a 70% isopropyl alcohol wipe or Clorox disinfecting wipes.
- Do not use bleach.
- Avoid moisture in any opening.⁴



Protecting Against COVID-19 in the Workplace

If you are re-opening your business, there are several measures to consider in order to protect yourself and your employees from COVID-19 transmission. Several workplaces such as hospitals already have stringent rules that employees and the general public should abide by. However, this guide is to support other employers who may not have policies in place for COVID-19 and are looking for some guidance.

HOW TO ADAPT THE WORKPLACE TO PREVENT COVID-19

- Identify potential COVID-19 exposures. These include work areas as well as job tasks such as large group meetings or common areas (e.g. break room, kitchen, meeting rooms, etc.). Eliminate or reduce these exposures by implementing new policies and procedures. Talk to employees about changes and seek their input.
- Increase air exchange in the building and reduce or eliminate recirculation by making sure all ventilation systems are working correctly.
- Determine if personal protective equipment (PPE) is necessary. PPE is usually required when there will be contact with blood, bodily fluids or respiratory secretions. If it is, then provide for employees and train them on its correct use. Cloth face coverings are not considered PPE. If PPE is not necessary, still encourage face cloth coverings as protection.
- Establish policies to continue social distancing following the six feet standard rule. Some ways to do this is by ⁶ implementing flexible work sites (telework), adjusting work hours to limit the number of employees in a workplace, modifying the workspace to increase physical space between employees, and by closing or limiting access to common areas where employees socialize.

HOW TO PREVENT TRANSMISSION AMONG EMPLOYEES

- Encourage employees that are sick, show symptoms, or have a sick family member to stay at home.
- Consider conducting health checks. These may be virtual or daily in-person (with social distancing, barriers, or protective equipment). For example, checking the temperature of employees before entry to facilities. Make these screenings as private as possible.
- Educate employees on actions they can take individually (such as the information provided above).
- For employees who commute to work using public transportation or ride sharing, consider offering support such as shifting their work hours to commute during less busy times.



BONUS TIP

SUPPORT YOUR EMPLOYEES' OVERALL HEALTH: Nearly 40% of people say their company has not asked how they are doing since the pandemic began. Employees' mental and overall health is just as important as the work they are providing. Support their mental health by starting consistent mental health conversations, asking them if they are okay, demonstrating supportive listening, and sharing available resources with them.⁷

STAFF TIPS

Our research assistant, Jerry, always carries hand sanitizer and hand cream in his bag whenever he leaves the house to buy groceries or to exercise. He highly recommends keeping hand cream close by to combat dry and chapped hands, especially because hands usually begin to show the first signs of aging.

The husband of our CEO, Jenna, does all the shopping. Her husband, Braden, practices the "one clean hand, one dirty hand" method: he wears a latex glove on one hand and only uses that hand to touch things that other people may have touched. To minimize exposure, he goes shopping alone and sends Jenna photos of things they might want. This way only one of them is exposed but both get to weigh in on purchases.

Our research associate, Chris, keeps hand sanitizer and Clorox wipes in his car for when he leaves the house. It's so easy to touch objects and surfaces without noticing it (even when you're careful), so when he gets back in his car, he sanitizes his hands, and then wipes everything down.



This infographic was made possible by:



SOURCES:

1. <https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>
2. <https://www.wdo.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public-when-and-how-to-use-masks>
3. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.htm>
4. <https://www.healthline.com/health-news/how-to-clean-your-phone-during-outbreak>
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>
6. <https://aiha-assets.sfo2.digitaloceanspaces.com/AIHA/resources/Guidance->
7. <https://www.aarp.org/health/healthy-living/info-2020/boosting-immune-response.html>

For more resources related to coping with COVID-19, please visit:

HARCdata.org/covid-19