

## COVID-19 Resources for High-Risk Groups

The CDC has determined that the below conditions significantly elevate an individual's risk of experiencing severe symptoms resulting from COVID-19 infection:

- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Lung disease
- HIV

Additionally, the below groups of people are at an elevated risk of experiencing severe symptoms and complications resulting from COVID-19 infection:

- Immunocompromised and immunosuppressed individuals
- Older individuals over 50
- Pregnant women

The below is a list of resources, information, and helpful tips to help keep higher-risk individuals safer. This information is intended to provide a quick and easy reference, and does not supplement or replace medical advice/opinion. Always seek the advice of a qualified medical professional with specific questions or for medical guidance.

## Specific Information for High-Risk Individuals:

Your Primary Care Physician (PCP) should always be your first point of contact. Seek their guidance for specific questions related to your individual health.

State employees who have COVA insurance plans have access to the clinic services of [Capital Square Healthcare](#). If you need a Primary Care Physician, Capital Square Healthcare can likely provide services in the absence of your regular PCP. Call 1-844-342-1791 to schedule an appointment or speak with staff.

### **Immunosuppressed/Immunocompromised and those over 50 years of age:**

The CDC has released general guidelines to mitigate the risk of infection, prevent the spread of COVID-19, and prevention for higher-risk groups on their website, [here](#).

### **Diabetes patients**

The American Diabetes Association has published a comprehensive guide for diabetes patients on their website, [here](#).

### **Pregnant women**

CDC has released a page with information specifically for pregnant and breastfeeding women [here](#)

### **Heart disease patients:**

The American Heart Association has specific information for heart disease patients on their website, [here](#).

### **Lung disease patients:**

The American Lung Association has specific information for lung disease patients as well as a hot line for specific questions on their website, [here](#).

### **HIV patients**

Specific guidance and a “what you should know” section for HIV patients is available through the CDC, [here](#).

## **Social Distancing**

The best thing you can do is avoid becoming infected with COVID-19 at all. The virus is mainly spread through water droplets in the breath of an infected person, who may or may not display symptoms. However, it can survive on some surfaces for days where it may transfer to others through contact. Some additional information on how COVID-19 spreads is available [here](#). Avoiding crowds and public spaces will reduce your exposure and risk of infection significantly. The CDC recommends that you practice social distancing by:

- Avoiding crowds larger than 10 people
- Consider rescheduling or delaying elective, routine, non-emergency medical appointments like dental and vision check-ups that may increase your exposure
- Teleworking whenever possible
- Maintaining about 6 feet between yourself and others
- Do not shake hands and avoid close contact with others when possible

Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water, but particularly after visiting public spaces. If soap is unavailable, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content. Note that home-made hand sanitizer recipes which use liquor will not contain adequate alcohol to properly sanitize your hands.

In addition, consider having food, medications, and any other supplies delivered to you. Services like [PillPack](#) accept Medicare and Medicare Supplemental Insurance and deliver many common medications. Additionally, many pharmacies offer prescription delivery services. Insulin may be delivered through other medical delivery services.

Many grocery stores offer delivery or in-store pick up. Consider shopping on-line and having your groceries prepared for pick-up ahead of time to reduce your exposure to other shoppers. If your local store does not offer these services, third-party services like [InstaCart](#) and [Shipt](#) can deliver for you. Apps like [Postmates](#) can be used to order delivery just about anything else.

Lastly, try to find ways to stay connected while social distancing. Many of us find it difficult to remove ourselves from social interactions. Consider calling friends and family to chat or using university services like [Zoom](#) to connect face-to-face. Social distancing does not necessitate social isolation.

# If You Begin To Feel Sick

## 1) Stay home and call your doctor.

Don't panic. Seek the opinion of a qualified medical professional and follow their advice.

Often experienced symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and shortness of breath. If you feel ill and are worried that you may have COVID-19, the current CDC guidance is that you immediately contact your Primary Care Physician. If you cannot reach your PCP, or are worried about exposure in a high-traffic PCP office, state employees may consider calling [Capital Square Healthcare](#). This clinic provides services to state employees with COVA care insurance.

If you aren't experiencing severe symptoms, you may be instructed to recover at home. The CDC has released a document on [how to take care of yourself at home](#). These instructions include guidance to protect others in the home from becoming ill.

## 2) Consult with your health care provider

Follow-up with your PCP as needed and get their advice on continued monitoring of your condition. For more information, see this page from the CDC about [monitoring your health for symptoms suggestive of COVID-19](#).

## 3) Stay in touch with others by phone or email

You may need to ask for help from friends, family, neighbors, community health workers, etc. if you become sick.

## 4) Know the emergency warning signs for COVID-19

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

**If you experience any of these symptoms, seek emergency medical assistance immediately.**

**The above list is not exhaustive.** If you experience other concerning warning signs that you may be developing complications, seek emergency medical assistance immediately.

## FAQs

### **How can I support my colleagues and community members who are social-distancing?**

Consider offering them assistance with procuring groceries or medical supplies, or simply by providing a friendly and reassuring presence. Leaving a note in the person's mailbox like the one attached at the end of this document may be a good strategy for offering help.

Remember that individuals who are social distancing are doing so to reduce their exposure. Be careful to respect their need for distance. Try not to pressure close contact by visiting their homes unsolicited.

### **Can I get COVID-19 from delivery packages?**

At present, the CDC does not believe that the public is in danger of COVID-19 infection from packages. However, the virus is very new and much of our understanding about how it spreads is based on experience from similar outbreaks in the past. Some studies have shown that COVID-19 can survive for several days on some surfaces. These factors make this question hard to answer.

You may choose to use gloves and follow the below advice of the CDC when unboxing or receiving packages:

*“Wear disposable gloves when cleaning and disinfecting surfaces. Gloves should be discarded after each cleaning. If reusable gloves are used, those gloves should be dedicated for cleaning and disinfection of surfaces for COVID-19 and should not be used for other purposes. Consult the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning and disinfection products used. Clean hands immediately after gloves are removed.”*

### **Will a mask or face covering protect me from COVID-19?**

While masks do not replace social distancing, the CDC strongly urges the use of a cloth mask or face covering. When used properly, masks significantly reduce the ease with which viral particles enter your respiratory system, reducing the likelihood of infection when exposed. To be effective, masks must cover both your mouth and nose.

Masks also protect others. Although the exact percentage of is not currently known, a significant portion of people infected with COVID-19 will not exhibit any symptoms (referred to as “asymptomatic”). Asymptomatic people will not appear ill nor feel ill, but can easily spread the virus. Face coverings also significantly reduce the number of viruses shed when someone who is infected exhales, coughs, or talks. Because of this, it is important for others to wear masks as well.

Together with social distancing, washing your hands, and adherence to CDC recommendations, face coverings significantly reduce both your risk of getting COVID-19 and the risk to others.

### **I have a friend or a loved one who is at an elevated risk – how can I help them stay well?**

Practice social distancing and reduce your own risk for becoming ill. You may also refer to an emailer FAQ in this list “How can I support my colleagues and community members who are social-distancing?”

If you become ill, contact a Primary Care Physician immediately and follow their advice, stay home and avoid contact with others, and follow [CDC recommendations for recovering and protecting other in the home](#).

The CDC also recommends the following to reduce the chances of infection:

Practice everyday preventive actions to help reduce your risk of getting sick and remind everyone in your home to do the same. These actions are especially important for older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects (kitchen sink, tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles).

# HELLO! If you are self-isolating, I can help.

**My name is**

.....

**I live locally at**

.....

**My phone number is**

.....

**If you are self-isolating due to COVID-19 I can help with:**

Picking up shopping

Posting mail

A friendly phone call

Urgent supplies

Just call or text me and I'll do my best to help you (for free!)

**Coronavirus is contagious. Please take every precaution to ensure you are spreading only kindness. Avoid physical contact (2m distance). Wash your hands regularly. Items should be left on your doorstep.**

**#ViralKindness**