

Thoughts for families as schools close for winter break



Coronavirus Reminders and Guidance

CDC released guidance on Dec. 4 recommending “universal face mask use” outside of the home for the first time since America’s new coronavirus epidemic began. So, mask up, Hoosiers, to help decrease the spread of COVID-19.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

The CDC wrote, “With colder weather, more time spent indoors, and the ongoing U.S. holiday season ... approximately 50% of the transmission of COVID-19 comes from asymptomatic persons. The United States has entered a phase of high-level [coronavirus] transmission where a multipronged approach to implementing all evidence-based public health strategies at both the individual and community levels is essential.” For all of us preparing to celebrate the holidays, it means we must focus on:

- Wearing our masks. Outside and even inside the home if someone is infected with coronavirus or if you are with someone who is vulnerable (examples: older, chronic health conditions). This is especially important where a physical distance of more than six feet cannot be maintained.
- Maintaining physical distance and limiting in-person contact with those outside of your household. This is true even on the holidays which we know will be hard.
- Avoiding nonessential indoor spaces and crowded outdoor settings; examples include shopping centers, restaurants, movie theaters, sports arenas, even churches can increase your likelihood of becoming sick. If you are at higher risk, consider having a friend or neighbor run your errands or checkout services that are available at many grocery stores and pharmacies to have your orders delivered curbside or to your home.
- Quarantining if you have been exposed (considered a close contact) to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. The CDC still recommends a 14-day quarantine. Get tested if you have been exposed, especially if you develop symptoms. The best days to get tested are on day 5 of your quarantine or later. Even if your test is negative, do not return to your normal activities until at least Day 11 and then only if wearing a mask at all times when you are out and about or within 6 ft of others in your home.
- Helping in the identification and quarantining the close contacts of people who are positive for COVID-19. Encourage testing when appropriate
- Protecting people most at risk for severe illness or death
- Protect essential workers
- Postponing travel unless it’s absolutely necessary. We know it’s hard and we all want to see extended family and friends, but travel increases your risk of illness, so postpone your travel until pandemic concerns subside. If you must travel, check with your local health department regarding travel guidance.

- Increasing room air ventilation when with others by opening a window or door or running a fan. Even though it's cold outside, some extra air circulation helps.
- Handwashing! Wash your hands for 20-30 seconds at least once every hour using soap or at least 60% alcohol hand sanitizer. Help younger children practice this important habit.
- Frequently (at least once a day) cleaning common surfaces such as kitchen and bathroom countertops, light switches, remote controls for the TV and other commonly touched surfaces to decrease sharing germs between family members.
- Staying home if you are sick and get tested if your symptoms are those associated with COVID-19. Don't share your illness with others around you. Stay home and mask up to protect others.
- The bottom line is that if you gather for the holidays, the safest way to celebrate the winter holidays is to celebrate at home with the people you live with. Reach out with a text message, phone call, other alternative method of contact with your extended family and friends this holiday season.

Mental Health Tips from the CDC

- The COVID-19 pandemic can be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and can cause feelings of isolation and loneliness.
- Stress during a pandemic can sometimes cause:
 - Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on
 - Changes in sleep or eating patterns
 - Difficulty sleeping or concentrating
 - Worsening of chronic health problems
 - Worsening of mental health conditions
 - Increased use of [tobacco](#), and/or [alcohol and other substances](#)
- Take care of your body by eating well-balanced meals, exercising regularly, and getting plenty of sleep.
- Connect with others by sharing your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member. Maintain healthy relationships and build a strong support system.
- Take breaks and make time to unwind and remind yourself that strong feelings will fade.
 - Take some deep breaths, go for a walk outside, do activities you usually enjoy.
- Stay informed, but set limits on how much news you watch, listen to, or read. Sometimes too much or too little information can make you worried, stressed, or nervous. Be aware that rumors may spread during a crisis, especially on social media. Always check your sources and turn to reliable sources of information.
- Make time to do enjoyable activities and traditions or even establish a new tradition this holiday season. Try to have as much "normal" activity as possible



- Seek help if needed. If you or someone you care about is distressed or is unable to complete their usual activities because of worry, stress or nervousness over the course of several days or weeks, seek help from a trusted clergy member, counselor or doctor.
- See attached reference sheet for resources to contact in case you need emergency help

<https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/selfcare.asp>

Helpful links:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/stress-coping/index.html>
- www.bewellindiana.org
- www.projectawarein.org

Mental Health Resources:

Get immediate help in a crisis

- Call 911
- Be Well Crisis Helpline: call 211, follow prompt for mental health and select option 3
- [Disaster Distress Helpline](#): 1-800-985-5990 (press 2 for Spanish), or text TalkWithUs for English or Hablanos for Spanish to 66746. Spanish speakers from Puerto Rico can text Hablanos to 1-787-339-2663.
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish, or [Lifeline Crisis Chat](#).
- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#): 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522
- [National Child Abuse Hotline](#): 1-800-4ACHild (1-800-422-4453) or text 1-800-422-4453
- [National Sexual Assault Hotline](#): 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or [Online Chat](#)
- [The Eldercare Locator](#): 1-800-677-1116 [TTY Instructions](#)
- [Veteran's Crisis Line](#): 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or [Crisis Chat](#) or text: 8388255

Find a healthcare provider or treatment for substance use disorder and mental health

- [Treatment Connection website](#)
- [LookUp Indiana](#)
- [SAMHSA's National Helpline](#): 1-800-662-HELP (4357) and TTY 1-800-487-4889
- [Treatment Services Locator Website](#)
- [Interactive Map of Selected Federally Qualified Health Centers](#)



10 things you can do to manage your COVID-19 symptoms at home

Accessible Version: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

If you have possible or confirmed COVID-19:

1. **Stay home** from work and school. And stay away from other public places. If you must go out, avoid using any kind of public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.



6. **Cover your cough and sneezes** with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow.



2. **Monitor your symptoms** carefully. If your symptoms get worse, call your healthcare provider immediately.



7. **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



3. **Get rest and stay hydrated.**



8. As much as possible, **stay** in a specific room and **away from other people** in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available. If you need to be around other people in or outside of the home, wear a mask.



4. If you have a medical appointment, **call the healthcare provider** ahead of time and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19.



9. **Avoid sharing personal items** with other people in your household, like dishes, towels, and bedding.



5. For medical emergencies, call 911 and **notify the dispatch personnel** that you have or may have COVID-19.



10. **Clean all surfaces** that are touched often, like counters, tabletops, and doorknobs. Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.



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cdc.gov/coronavirus

