

In an effort to give you all the best available information about what's happening in Aroostook County, Maine and the United States, this information was compiled as something you can refer to for guidance. Especially if you are unable to access email or the Internet. This pamphlet seeks to address those who are at higher risk: Our Seniors and especially those with underlying conditions.

## What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a novel (new) coronavirus which was first detected in December 2019 in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China and has now been detected in other countries, including the United States.

For some, the respiratory virus causes mild symptoms like the common cold or influenza (flu), for others it can cause severe pneumonia that requires medical care or hospitalization.

The virus is named "SARS-CoV-2" and the disease it causes is named "coronavirus disease 2019" (abbreviated "COVID-19").

## What are the Symptoms?

Symptoms of COVID-19 may include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Sore throat (in some patients)

Symptoms may appear **2-14 days after exposure.**

**Most** patients experience mild symptoms and can recuperate at home, but others, particularly those with underlying medical conditions, may experience more severe respiratory illness.

## How does it spread?

The virus appears to spread in similar ways to influenza (flu) and the common cold. This may include spreading through:

- The air by coughing and sneezing;
- Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands;
- Touching an object or surface with the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes

The virus can spread from person-to-person and in some locations there is apparent community spread, meaning some people are infected and are not sure how or where they became infected.

## How can I help to prevent the spread?

There are simple steps you can take to reduce the possible spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses such as influenza and the common cold:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when washing is unavailable;
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick;
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands;
- Stay home while you're sick and avoid close contact with others
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces

Currently there is no vaccine available to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Several labs are working on changing that, but it's going to take time.

## What should I do if I have symptoms?

Call your doctor. Tell your doctor about your symptoms and he will be able to tell you where to go if necessary. Tell your doctor about any travel or contact with any known COVID-19 cases. Your healthcare professional will work with Maine CDC to determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19.

## If you are sick:

- You should wear a face mask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a face mask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then you should do your best to cover your coughs and sneezes, and people who are caring for you should wear a face mask if they enter your room.
- If you are NOT sick: You do not need to wear a face mask unless you are caring for someone who is sick (and they are not able to wear a face mask). Face masks may be in short supply and they should be saved for caregivers.

## Remember

Most of our local stores are offering special hours for shopping as well as help getting your order together so you don't even have to come into the store (curbside delivery).

You can reduce your exposure by taking advantage of these services.

## **General Recommendations for Routine Cleaning and Disinfection of Households**

Community members can practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, and electronics with household cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants that are appropriate for the surface, following label instructions.

Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

For electronics follow the manufacturer's instructions for all cleaning and disinfection products. Consider use of wipeable covers for electronics. If no manufacturer guidance is available, consider the use of alcohol-based wipes or spray containing at least 70% alcohol to disinfect touch screens. Dry surfaces thoroughly to avoid pooling of liquids.

### **Other considerations**

An ill person should eat/be fed in their room if possible. Non-disposable food service items used should be handled with gloves and washed with hot water or in a dishwasher. Clean hands after handling used food service items.

If possible, dedicate a lined trash can for an ill person. Use gloves when removing garbage bags, handling, and disposing of trash. Wash hands after handling or disposing of trash.

## **Hand hygiene and other preventive measures:**

Household members should clean hands often, including immediately after removing protective gloves (when used) and after contact with an ill person, by washing hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.

If soap and water are not available and hands are not visibly dirty, an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol may be used. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.

Household members should follow normal preventive actions while at work and home including recommended hand hygiene and avoiding touching eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Additional key times to clean hands include:

- After blowing one's nose, coughing, or sneezing;
- After using the restroom;
- Before eating or preparing food;
- After contact with animals or pets
- Before and after providing routine care for another person who needs assistance (e.g. a child)

# Covid-19

## Guidelines on how to stay safe.

## Some information you may not know.

Courtesy of:

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