



CONCORD BOARD OF HEALTH

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Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Guidance for Those at Higher Risk of Serious Illness from Corona Virus (COVID-19) Information from the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Out of an abundance of caution, I am writing to you today to share some information and suggestions on how you might plan and prepare for a possible Corona virus outbreak in our community.

Older people and people of all ages with severe underlying health conditions — like heart disease, lung disease and diabetes, for example — seem to be at higher risk of developing serious COVID-19 illness. If a COVID-19 outbreak happens in our community, it could last for a long time (an outbreak is when a large number of people suddenly get sick.) Depending on how severe the outbreak is, public health officials may recommend community actions, such as staying home, to reduce people's risk of being exposed to COVID-19. These actions can slow the spread and reduce the impact of disease.

If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19 because of your age or because you have a serious long-term health problem, it is especially important for you to take actions to reduce your risk of getting sick with the disease.

What Should I Be Doing NOW to Prepare and Help Protect Myself?

Prepare--Have supplies on hand

To help prevent getting the COVID-19 virus, seniors and those with underlying health conditions could be advised to stay home and avoid public gatherings and you should stay informed about changing conditions in our community. If you become sick, you could be quarantined for 14 days. In case you need to stay home for a prolonged period of time, you should plan to have supplies on hand.

- Contact your healthcare provider to ask about obtaining extra necessary medications. Some pharmacies, including CVS, may be able to give you an extra week of medication to have on hand because of the Corona virus situation. Adequate Insulin supplies are crucial. Keep a list of all your current medications.
- If you are on oxygen, make sure you have enough supply on hand to last for a couple of weeks.
- If you cannot get extra medications, consider using mail-order for medications.
- Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (tissues, etc.) to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home.
- Have enough non-perishable food and personal hygiene/incontinence products for 2 weeks.

Take everyday precautions to prevent infection

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place.

- If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- To the extent possible, avoid contact with high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.
- Wash your hands after touching surfaces in public places.
- Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.
- Avoid crowds, especially in poorly ventilated spaces. Your risk of exposure to respiratory viruses like COVID-19 may increase in crowded, closed-in settings with little air circulation if there are people in the crowd who are sick.
- Avoid all non-essential travel including plane trips, and especially avoid embarking on cruise ships.

Have a plan for if you get sick or need to stay at home:

- Consult with your health care provider for more information about monitoring your health for symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.
- 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. Plan now for who could assist you.
- Determine who can provide you with care if your caregiver gets sick.
- Investigate options for food and medication delivery should this be needed.
- Consider contacting the Council on Aging to help you talk through your plan. They can be reached at 978-318-3020

What to Do if You Get Sick

Symptoms of COVID-19 infection include fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Call your healthcare provider and let them know about your symptoms. If you need to seek medical help at your doctor's office, urgent care center, or hospital emergency room, **CALL AHEAD**. This will help them care for you and keep others from getting exposed or infected.

In an emergency, call 911.

For More information

More information is posted on the Town of Concord website:

<https://concordma.gov/2561/Coronavirus-2019-COVID19>. The CDC is also an excellent source of up to date information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact the Concord Health Division at 978-318-3275.

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