

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I GET SICK?

- If you do get sick, first call your healthcare provider.
- Unless you need immediate medical care, you should stay at home to avoid spreading your illness.
- If you live with others in your home, stay in a room away from them as much as possible, and limit contact with pets.
- Stay in touch with others by phone or email.
- You may need to ask for help from friends, family, neighbors, community health workers, and others if you become sick.
- Determine who can provide you with care if your caregiver gets sick.
- If you develop **emergency warning signs** for COVID-19, call 9-1-1 and get medical attention immediately. In adults, emergency warning signs include:
 - **Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath,**
 - **Persistent pain or pressure in the chest,**
 - **New confusion or inability to arouse, and/or**
 - **Bluish lips or face**

FACT: 8 out of 10 deaths from COVID-19 reported in the U.S. have been in adults 65 years old and older. This is why it is so important to follow the ways to protect yourself listed on this fact sheet.

WHERE SHOULD I GO FOR THE MOST UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION?



www.cdc.gov/coronavirus



Coronavirus Hotline
1-855-600-3453



www.coronavirus.gov



For non-health related
COVID-19 questions
1-833-551-0518



www.ihs.gov



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CORONAVIRUS 2019 (COVID-19) COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FOR TRIBAL ELDERS

WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 stands for Coronavirus Disease 2019. It is a respiratory disease (affects lungs and breathing) caused by a new virus called coronavirus 2019.



**Older adults,
65 years and
older, are at risk
for more severe
COVID-19 illness**

WHY ARE OLDER ADULTS AT HIGHER RISK?

- Older adults are at higher risk for more serious COVID-19 illness and death.
- This is because our immune systems grow weaker as we age, which makes it harder for older adults to fight off infectious diseases.
- Older adults are also more likely to have chronic health conditions, like diabetes, lung, and heart disease, that make it more difficult to recover.
- Age increases the risk that the lungs will shut down when an older person has COVID-19 disease.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

- The main symptoms of COVID-19, which may appear between 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus, include:
 - fever
 - cough
 - difficulty breathing or shortness of breath



WHEN SHOULD I CALL A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER?

- It is important to call your healthcare provider (or have someone call for you) as soon as you begin to develop symptoms.
- Always call first, so that the clinic or hospital can prepare and prevent the spread of infection.

HOW DO THEY TEST FOR COVID-19?

- The test involves swabbing the nose and throat, and taking samples of any saliva and mucus that is coughed up.

HOW IS IT SPREAD?

- This coronavirus is spread mainly between people in close contact with one another through droplets from coughs or sneezes.
- It may also be spread when you touch a surface or object with the virus on it, then touch your mouth, nose, or eyes.

HOW IS COVID-19 TREATED

- There is currently **no vaccine** to prevent COVID-19 and **no specific medication** to cure it.
- Mild symptoms can be managed with cold medicines, fever reducers like Tylenol, getting lots of rest, and drinking plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.

HOW CAN I BEST PROTECT MYSELF?

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus altogether.

- **STAY HOME.** Avoid people who may be infected by staying home and avoiding any unnecessary travel. Avoid crowds. Keep space between you and anyone who is sick.
- **WASH HANDS OFTEN.** Wash your hands for 20 seconds with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
- **AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE, NOSE AND EYES.**
- **AVOID SHAKING HANDS.**
- **AVOID TOUCHING HIGH-TRAFFIC SURFACES** such as door handles, handrails, or counters. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.
- **SNEEZE OR COUGH INTO A TISSUE**, or the inside of your elbow.
- **CLEAN AND DISINFECT FREQUENTLY USED ITEMS** as much as possible.

HOW CAN I PREPARE TO BE AT HOME FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME?

Here are some simple ways to prepare:

- **MEDICATION.** Refill all essential prescription medications. Get at least a 30 day supply. Also, be sure you have enough over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (pain and fever relievers, cough and cold medicine, diabetes test strips, etc.).
- **FOOD and HOUSEHOLD ITEMS.** Have enough basic household items and groceries on hand so you are prepared to stay at home for an extended period of time. Stock up on non-perishable food items to minimize trips to stores. Consider ways of getting food brought to your house through family, friends, or community programs.
- **REACH OUT TO FAMILY & FRIENDS.** Stay in touch with the people close to you. If you live alone, have a loved one or someone nearby check on you regularly.

