



# HOW TO PREPARE FOR COVID-19

Now is the time to prepare in the event the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) begins spreading in the U.S. Use this fact sheet to help you plan. You can also stay up-to-date on current information about COVID-19 by visiting <https://nkyhealth.org/individual-or-family/health-alerts/coronavirus/>, or following @nkyhealth on Facebook and Twitter.

## What is COVID-19 and how does it spread?

COVID-19 is a respiratory virus that can spread easily from person to person, mostly through coughing and sneezing. When a sick person coughs or sneezes near you, you can breathe in droplets that have the virus. The droplets can also land on surfaces you may touch with your hands.

## Teach your family the importance of these habits, and start practicing them now:



Wash your hands often with soap and water. If there is no soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand gel. Wash your hands before eating, drinking or touching your face.



Cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze. Throw away used tissues in a trash can, and wash your hands. If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve and not into your hands.

We may have to change our daily routines during a COVID-19 outbreak. This may be hard for some people. Talk to people where you live and work about what you will do during such an outbreak. Plan now so you are ready if an outbreak occurs.

## Limiting contact helps prevent spread of disease.

We have learned from past disease outbreaks that during an outbreak limiting contact among people helps to slow the spread of the virus, and helps to save lives. Being around other people makes you more likely to get sick or to make others sick. Until there is a vaccine for COVID-19, limiting contact among people is our main tool to contain the disease and prevent others from getting it. If there is a COVID-19 outbreak in the U.S., public health officials may ask you and your community to take actions to help limit contact among people. This may cause your daily routines to change for several months.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PLAN FOR COVID-19

## Make plans for your household.

Most people with COVID-19 can be cared for at home. During an outbreak, hospitals may only have room to care patients who are the most ill or require special care.

- Do NOT stockpile masks. The CDC and the U. S. Surgeon General do NOT recommend that people who are well wear facemasks to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19. Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, coughing, difficulty breathing) to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
- Plan to stay home if you become sick with COVID-19. Staying home will keep you from giving it to others. Make sure others in your household also stay home when they are sick. You may also need to stay home if someone in your household is sick with COVID-19.
- Plan who will take care of your children if you are sick. Share your plans with family members, neighbors and friends.
- Plan to buy and store at least two weeks of food and water for yourself, your family and pets. Also, make sure you have enough of any prescription medicines you and/or your family take. This supply can support your household if you have to stay home.
- Have basic, over-the-counter health supplies such as a thermometer, facemasks, tissues, soap, hand sanitizers and medicine to relieve fever.
- Have current phone numbers and e-mails for work, teachers and community groups.
- Make plans with your workplace. Ask your boss about the company's plans for COVID-19. Learn about options for working from home or changing shifts. Plan to stay connected to your workplace by phone, e-mail or Internet.
- Make plans for your children if schools have to be closed for an extended period of time. Pay attention to information provided by your children's schools through their usual communication channels.
- Make plans for your children if before or after-school programs get cancelled.
- If students live on campus, ask how the school will help students if there is an outbreak.
- Make plans with your community groups. Ask your community groups about their plans for COVID-19 to limit contact among people. Talk about ways you can take part in your group from home by phone, e-mail or Internet. Maintain a list of current phone numbers and e-mail addresses of group leaders and members.
- Talk about ways your community groups can help assist others during an outbreak. Examples include collecting donations of supplies, checking on people who may need help, and providing child-care support.
- Find out which community groups can support you and your family during an outbreak.

## Each of us can make a difference.

In a COVID-19 outbreak, limiting contact with others can help slow the spread of illness and help save lives. Each of us can make a difference. Together, we can help protect ourselves, our families and our communities. Be aware, plan ahead and share with others what you have learned.

## For more information:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
- <https://nkyhealth.org/individual-or-family/health-alerts/coronavirus/>

