

COVID-19 COMMUNITY GUIDELINES

Editors: Daphne P. Ferdinand, RN, PhD and Paul Underwood, MD (ABC Community Programs Committee Co-Chairs); LaPrincess C. Brewer, MD, MPH; Rimsy Denis, MD, MPH, MBA; Keith C. Ferdinand, MD; Laurence Watkins, MD; Joyce Gwen Taylor, CHA; Kevin Alexander, MD (ABC Coronavirus Task Force Co-Chair); Norrisa Haynes, MD, MPH; Peter Chin-Hong, MD; and Michelle A. Albert, MD, MPH (ABC President)



We know there are a lot of questions about COVID-19, and its impact is evolving everyday. These guidelines are for community members who want to help protect their community's health. Use them to combat common myths and misconceptions regarding covid-19 and check www.abc cardio.org for regular updates. You should also watch the [ABC Webinar, At The Heart of The Matter: Unmasking the Invisibility of COVID-19 in Diverse Populations](#), to learn more about the virus.

| **Limit exposure to other people.**

The best way to prevent COVID-19 (coronavirus) infection is to avoid exposure to the virus. If you limit your chances of being exposed to the virus, you reduce the chances of you getting the virus or spreading it to others like family, friends, and co-workers. Therefore, to prevent yourself from getting the Coronavirus (COVID-19), you must avoid physical contact with other people. If you can stay at home and not go outside or in public, that is recommended. If you are not feeling well, limit contact with other family members, and contact a healthcare provider or clinic for advice.

| **Wash hands frequently.**

Basic hygiene is also very important to prevent infection. Wash your hands OFTEN with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Wash your hands, especially after going out of your home, to the toilet, before eating and after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth in general, especially with unwashed hands.

| **Clean home surfaces.**

Clean frequently touched surfaces around your house with regular household cleaners or with Lysol. The COVID-19 virus has been noted to survive on many surfaces, including plastics. This is particularly important if anyone has entered your home shelter from the outside, such as returning from work, shopping, or a service visit.

| Limit travel.

Limit all unnecessary travel, and if you must use public transportation, **WEAR A MASK** or some type of face covering. Try not to touch commonly used handrails, etc. Wash your hands with soap and water, or use a hand sanitizer as soon as you arrive at your destination. Throwing away disposable gloves can also be useful.

| Wear a mask or mouth and nose covering.

Since most of us have to go outside for work, food, or other necessities, you need to wear a **MASK** or some type of nose and mouth covering. If you do not have a mask, use a clean cloth, like a bandanna or scarf to cover your mouth and nose. Wear this mask or cloth covering any time you go out in public. Wear this mask or nose and mouth covering if allowed on your job. Scientists believe the virus is spread by secretions from coughing or sneezing or even close physical contact with others. Infectious droplets can be spread up to 6 feet or more if someone coughs or sneeze.

| How can people maintain good physical and mental health during the shelter in place?

It is important to be physically and mentally healthy during these challenging times. Therefore, try to make sure you and your family eat healthy foods, like fruits and vegetables, as much as possible. Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated. Use whatever methods that are available to you to stay physically active within your own physical limitations. You can walk in place, do push-ups, jumping jacks, or just stretch your body. And be sure to keep in touch with family and friends by telephone or video chat to avoid feelings of loneliness and depression until you can visit again.

Stay spiritually fed by praying often, reading the Bible, and watching your favorite church service on TV or the computer. Isolation can cause feelings of loneliness, so help yourself and others by choosing to check on other people during this shelter in place time. This can be by telephone, video chat, text, or email.

Get plenty of healthy laughter by watching your favorite TV shows, comedies, and movies. Play games with the members of your household, even while keeping your 6 feet of distance from them.

How should people handle their regularly scheduled medical appointments, medications, and other illnesses?

Regular Doctor Visits

Some doctors are allowing patients to schedule visits via telehealth or telephone. Telehealth is a scheduled visit with your doctor that allows the doctor to see you and you to see the doctor face to face on your phone or computer. Your problems can be addressed without visiting the office. This is a great substitute if you don't want to leave the house. Call your doctor and ask about telehealth or telephone visits. If you have to go to the doctor's office, remember to avoid close contact, and stay about 6 feet from people, if possible. Wear your mask to the doctor's office.

Medications

It is extremely important to continue taking your prescribed medications. If you have any major medical problems with heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, stroke, bleeding, etc., contact your health provider, or go to the Emergency Room as you would usually do. Conditions, like heart attacks, strokes, diabetes, and asthma are still significant causes of death in communities of color.

Sickness

If you feel ill for any reason, contact your doctor's office. **SEEK HELP, STAY AT HOME, AND DO NOT GO TO WORK IF YOU HAVE A DRY COUGH, FEVER, OR SHORTNESS OF BREATH.** Follow the "CALL FIRST" rule if you have a dry cough, fever, elevated temperature, or shortness of breath. Seek help, but **CALL** to alert the medical team that you are coming and may need testing for coronavirus.

What symptoms should everyone monitor?

Symptoms of Coronavirus

Patients with coronavirus may have a dry cough, elevated temperature (or a feeling of increased warmth), and shortness of breath. If you have an elevated temperature or dry cough, you should **CALL** your doctor's office **FIRST** to make them aware of these symptoms which may be from coronavirus so that they can prepare for your visit with the proper protective equipment. Please follow the instructions given to you. If you have shortness of breath, you need to **CALL** your nearest emergency room, and alert them of your visit and the possibility of you needing to be tested for coronavirus. The emergency room staff also need to be prepared to examine you while wearing protective equipment.

How to Quarantine at Home If You are Sick

If at all possible, you should keep 6 feet distance from your family members at home. Definitely, if you are sick or told to be on isolation, you should not have physical contact with your family members, and **ISOLATE YOURSELF** to one room in the house. Use a mask or nose and mouth covering while **ON ISOLATION** in your household. Do not share eating utensils, towels, or other linen and household items. Wash everything you use or touch frequently. Follow the doctor's instructions.

What should you do if you have close contact with someone with COVID-19 infection?

Limit your contact with other family members, friends, and coworkers. Immediately call your healthcare provider, and tell them about your contact with the infected person and about your symptoms. Your healthcare provider will advise you regarding your next steps, such as monitoring your symptoms, seeing a healthcare provider, quarantining yourself, and protecting your other family members.

Links for Additional Information

- ▶ [ABC's Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Information and Resource Hub](#)
- ▶ [ABC's 7 Steps to a Healthy Start](#)
- ▶ [ABC's Cooking for Your Heart and Soul](#)

Education

- ▶ [Watch Doctors Explain Why COVID-19 May Be More Dangerous for African Americans](#)
- ▶ [Nurse's message on COVID-19 symptoms in Blacks](#)
- ▶ [Dr Alanna Morris advises heart failure patients during the covid pandemic](#)

Recommendations

- ▶ [Recommendations for Cloth Face Covers \(video by Surgeon General\)](#)
- ▶ [Instructions on Making/Wearing Homemade Masks](#)
- ▶ [DIY Cloth Face Coverings](#)
- ▶ [Tips and Tricks for Getting Groceries During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- ▶ [Microdroplets suspending in air](#)
- ▶ [Caring for Someone at Home who May Have COVID-19](#)
- ▶ [Caring for Someone Sick at Home](#)

Stress Reduction

- ▶ [Stress and Coping](#)
- ▶ [25 Minutes of Meditation Eases Stress](#)
- ▶ [Panic Free\(er\) Through Mindfulness and Meditation](#)
- ▶ [How to Ease Stress During the Coronavirus Pandemic](#)
- ▶ [Your Guide to Getting Cash During the Pandemic](#)

Healthful Enjoyment

- ▶ [Six Feet By Doug E. Fresh and Novant Health](#)
- ▶ [20 Seconds or More ft. Doug E. Fresh, Artie Green & Gerry Gunn](#)
- ▶ [Anthony Hamilton and Novant Health](#)
- ▶ ["La Di Da Di" By Doug E. Fresh and Novant Health](#)
- ▶ [Stay at Home by Kanvee Adams](#)