

## **Staying Healthy**

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Many people around the world are concerned about their own and their loved ones' health because of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). Because there is currently no vaccine to cure this illness, the best way to prevent it is to simply avoid being exposed to it. The virus is spread from person-to-person when an infected individual coughs or sneezes. It is very important to know the most effective methods to protect ourselves from the virus and prevent spreading it to those around us.

The most basic step of maintaining hygiene, that should be done regardless of if there is a pandemic or not, is to wash our hands. Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public space or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not available, using hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol will suffice. Be sure to cover all surfaces of the hand and rub them together until they feel dry.

Going hand in hand with making sure our hands are always clean, we should also be conscious about touching our face. Our nose and eyes are common places for germs to enter our body, so it's best to avoid touching our faces if possible. Nail biting should also be avoided, but especially during this time.

Generally maintaining health and keeping our immune systems strong will also help with the fight against the virus. Feeling tired when feeling under the weather means the body is not fighting the germs and pathogens as hard as it can. Getting enough sleep, which is a full 8-10 hours a night, is recommended to keep the body in its best shape. What we put into our bodies should also be taken into consideration. Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables can help support our immune system, meaning our body will have a better chance fighting off any sickness.

Taking steps to protect others should be on our minds as much as keeping ourselves healthy. Staying at home if feeling sick is obvious; putting a distance between yourself and others if the virus is spreading in the community is extremely important, particularly for individuals who are at higher risk of getting sick.

Covering coughs and sneezes should be done all throughout the year, but especially during this time. Coughing and sneezing into the inside of the elbow or shirt is recommended and used tissues should be thrown into the trash. Hands should be washed with soap and water immediately after.

It is very understandable to be concerned during this time because of the virus, but there are ways to protect yourself and others from this sickness. Being conscious of our and others' actions and maintaining general hygiene is important to keep ourselves, our loved ones, and our community safe.