

COVID-19 Employee Training

BELLEVUE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Understanding COVID-19

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is an illness caused by a virus that can spread from person to person.

COVID-19 symptoms can range from mild (or no symptoms) to severe illness.

All workers should have a basic understanding of COVID-19 including;

- how the disease spreads,
- symptoms, and
- ways to prevent or minimize the spread.

How COVID-19 Spreads

How COVID-19 Spreads

[How COVID-19 Spreads](#) – CDC Updated Oct. 28, 2020

- Person to Person
- Close Contact
- Airborne Transmission
- Contaminated Surfaces
- Between People & Animals

How COVID-19 Spreads

COVID-19 spreads easily from person to person, mainly by the following routes:

- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, breathes, sings or talks.
 - Respiratory droplets cause infection when they are inhaled or deposited on mucous membranes, such as those that line the inside of the nose and mouth.

Less common ways COVID-19 can spread:

Under certain circumstances (for example, when people are in enclosed spaces with poor ventilation), COVID-19 can sometimes be spread by [airborne transmission](#).

COVID-19 spreads less commonly through contact with contaminated surfaces.

People who are infected but do not have symptoms can also spread the virus to others.

Person to Person

COVID-19 spreads very easily from person to person

- How easily a virus spreads from person to person can vary. The virus that causes COVID-19 appears to spread more efficiently than influenza but not as efficiently as measles, which is among the most contagious viruses known to affect people.

Close Contact

COVID-19 most commonly spreads during close contact

- People who are physically near (within 6 feet) a person with COVID-19 or have direct contact with that person are at greatest risk of infection.
- When people with COVID-19 cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe they produce respiratory droplets. These droplets can range in size from larger droplets (some of which are visible) to smaller droplets. Small droplets can also form particles when they dry very quickly in the airstream.
- Infections occur mainly through exposure to respiratory droplets when a person is in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.
- Respiratory droplets cause infection when they are inhaled or deposited on mucous membranes, such as those that line the inside of the nose and mouth.
- As the respiratory droplets travel further from the person with COVID-19, the concentration of these droplets decreases. Larger droplets fall out of the air due to gravity. Smaller droplets and particles spread apart in the air.
- With passing time, the amount of infectious virus in respiratory droplets also decreases.

Airborne Transmission

COVID-19 can sometimes be spread by airborne transmission

Some infections can be spread by exposure to virus in small droplets and particles that can linger in the air for minutes to hours. These viruses may be able to infect people who are further than 6 feet away from the person who is infected or after that person has left the space.

This kind of spread is referred to as airborne transmission and is an important way that infections like tuberculosis, measles, and chicken pox are spread.

There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation. Sometimes the infected person was breathing heavily, for example while singing or exercising.

- Under these circumstances, scientists believe that the amount of infectious smaller droplet and particles produced by the people with COVID-19 became concentrated enough to spread the virus to other people. The people who were infected were in the same space during the same time or shortly after the person with COVID-19 had left.

Available data indicate that it is much more common for the virus that causes COVID-19 to spread through close contact with a person who has COVID-19 than through airborne transmission. [1]

DUE TO THE RISK OF AIRBORNE TRANSMISSION, IT IS VITAL THAT YOU USE THE COMBINED PROTECTION METHODS OF PHYSICAL DISTANCING AND WEARING A FACE COVERING.

Contaminated Surfaces

COVID-19 spreads less commonly through contact with contaminated surfaces

Respiratory droplets can also land on surfaces and objects. It is possible that a person could get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or eyes.

Spread from touching surfaces is not thought to be a common way that COVID-19 spreads

Between People and Animals

COVID-19 rarely spreads between people and animals

It appears that the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread from people to animals in some situations. CDC is aware of a small number of pets worldwide, including cats and dogs, reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, mostly after close contact with people with COVID-19. Learn what you should do if you have pets.

At this time, the risk of COVID-19 spreading from animals to people is considered to be low. Learn about COVID-19 and pets and other animals.

Symptoms of Coronavirus

Symptoms of Coronavirus

[Symptoms of Coronavirus](#) - CDC Updated May 13, 2020

- What you need to know
- People at Increased Risk for Severe Illness
- Watch for symptoms
- When to seek emergency medical attention
- What is the difference between Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19?

What you need to know

- Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.

People at Increased Risk for Severe Illness:

Some people are more likely than others to become severely ill

- [Older Adults](#)
- [People with Medical Conditions](#)

Watch for symptoms

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- This list does not include all possible symptoms. CDC will continue to update this list as we learn more about COVID-19.

When to seek emergency medical attention

Look for emergency warning signs* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

**This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.*

Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

What is the difference between Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19?

[COVID-19 & Seasonal Flu](#) – CDC

Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a new coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses.

What is the difference between Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19?

There are some key differences between flu and COVID-19. COVID-19 seems to spread more easily than flu and causes more serious illnesses in some people.

It can also take longer before people show symptoms and people can be contagious for longer.

Another important difference is there is a vaccine to protect against flu.

There is currently no vaccine to prevent COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to avoid being exposed to the virus.

What is the difference between Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19?

Because some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, it may be hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone, and testing may be needed to help confirm a diagnosis. Flu and COVID-19 share many characteristics, but there are some key differences between the two.

What is the difference between Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19?

Similarities:

Both COVID-19 and flu can have varying degrees of signs and symptoms, ranging from no symptoms (asymptomatic) to severe symptoms. Common symptoms that COVID-19 and flu share include:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle pain or body aches
- Headache
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults

What is the difference between Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19?

Differences:

- Flu
 - Flu viruses can cause mild to severe illness, including common signs and symptoms listed above.
- COVID-19
 - COVID-19 seems to cause more serious illnesses in some people. Other signs and symptoms of COVID-19, different from flu, may include change in or loss of taste or smell.

Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ILLNESS IS TO AVOID BEING EXPOSED TO THIS VIRUS. YOU CAN TAKE STEPS TO SLOW THE SPREAD.

Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

- Physical Distancing
- Face Covering Outside the Home
- Frequent Handwashing
- Limit Outside Contact
- Stay Home When Sick

Physical Distancing

Stay at least 6 feet away from others, whenever possible. This is very important in preventing the spread of COVID-19.

[Stay at least 6 feet away from others](#)

Face Covering Outside the Home

[Cover your mouth and nose with a mask](#) when around others. This helps reduce the risk of spread both by close contact and by airborne transmission.

You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.

The mask is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.

Everyone should wear a [mask](#) in public settings and when around people who don't live in your household, especially when other [social distancing](#) measures are difficult to maintain.

- Masks should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.

Do NOT use a mask meant for a healthcare worker. Currently, surgical masks and N95 respirators are critical supplies that should be reserved for healthcare workers and other first responders.

Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The mask is not a substitute for social distancing.

Frequent Handwashing

[Wash your hands](#) often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.

It's especially important to wash:

- Before eating or preparing food
- Before touching your face
- After using the restroom
- After leaving a public place
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling your mask
- After changing a diaper
- After caring for someone sick
- After touching animals or pets

If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Cover coughs and sneezes

Cover coughs and sneezes

Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow and do not spit.

Throw used tissues in the trash.

Immediately **wash your hands** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Limit Outside Contact

[Avoid crowded indoor spaces](#) and [ensure indoor spaces are properly ventilated](#) by bringing in outdoor air as much as possible. In general, being outdoors and in spaces with good ventilation reduces the risk of exposure to infectious respiratory droplets.

Inside your home: Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

- If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.

Outside your home: Put 6 feet of distance between yourself and people who don't live in your household.

- Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
- [Stay at least 6 feet \(about 2 arms' length\) from other people.](#)
- Keeping distance from others is especially important for [people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.](#)

Clean and Disinfect

Clean AND disinfect [frequently touched surfaces](#) daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.

If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Then, use a household disinfectant. Most common [EPA-registered household disinfectants](#) will work.

Stay Home When Sick

Stay home and isolate from others when sick.

[Stay home and isolate](#)

[Routinely clean and disinfect](#)

Protecting Yourself

Protecting Yourself

[How to Protect Yourself & Others](#) – CDC Updated Nov. 4, 2020

- Take Steps to Prevent the Spread
- Monitor Your Health Daily
- Protect Yourself at Home

Take Steps to Prevent the Spread

1. Know how the virus spreads
2. Wash your hands often & properly
3. Avoid close contact with others
4. Cover your mouth and nose with a mask when around others
5. Cover coughs and sneezes

Monitor Your Health Daily

Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.

- Especially important if you are running essential errands, going into the office or workplace, and in settings where it may be difficult to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.

Take your temperature if symptoms develop.

- Don't take your temperature within 30 minutes of exercising or after taking medications that could lower your temperature, like acetaminophen.

Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

Protect Your Health This Flu Season

It's likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both spread this fall and winter. Healthcare systems could be overwhelmed treating both patients with flu and patients with COVID-19. This means getting a flu vaccine during 2020-2021 is more important than ever.

While getting a flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19 there are many important benefits, such as:

- Flu vaccines have been shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization, and death.
- Getting a flu vaccine can also save healthcare resources for the care of patients with COVID-19.

Protecting Yourself at Home

Protecting Yourself at Home – CDC Updated Nov. 9, 2020

Protecting yourself and others at home is important. Workers who share their household with others should follow CDC-recommended home guidelines if living in close quarters or shared housing.

What you need to know:

- In general, the more closely you interact with others and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread.
- If you decide to engage in public activities, continue to protect yourself by practicing everyday preventive actions.
- Keep these items on hand when venturing out: a face mask, tissues, and a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, if possible.
- Should you go out? Learn what factors to consider before you head out.

Protecting Yourself & Others at Work

Protecting Yourself & Others at Work

Workers should take the following steps to protect themselves at work:

- Follow the policies and procedures of the employer related to illness, cleaning and disinfecting, and work meetings and travel.
- Stay home if sick, except to get medical care.
- Practice physical distancing by keeping at least 6 feet away from fellow co-workers, customers, and visitors when possible, even when in or around break rooms, water coolers and/or non-work areas.
- Wear cloth face coverings, especially when social distancing is not possible. Cloth face coverings are intended to protect other people—not the wearer.

Protecting Yourself & Others at Work

- Workers should inform their supervisor if they or their colleagues develop symptoms at work. No one with COVID-19 symptoms should be present at the workplace.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing noses, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place.
 - Use hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% ethanol (preferred) or 70% isopropanol (if the product is inaccessible to unsupervised children) if soap and water are not available.
 - Never use hand sanitizers with methanol due to its high toxicity to both children and adults.

Protecting Yourself & Others at Work

- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
- To the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door handles, handrails (to the safest extent possible), etc.
- Where possible, avoid direct physical contact such as shaking hands with people.
- Minimize handling cash, credit cards, and mobile or electronic devices when possible.
- Avoid all non-essential travel.
- Workers who use public transportation, ride sharing, taxis or carpooling to travel to and from work should protect themselves. Always remember to use face coverings, practice social distancing where applicable, and wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after using such transportation.

District COVID-19 Prevention Program

District COVID-19 Prevention Program

1. Systems for communication
2. Identification and evaluation of COVID-19 hazards
3. Investigation and responding to COVID-19 cases in the workplace
4. Correction of COVID-19 hazards
5. Training and instruction
6. Physical distancing
7. Face coverings
8. Other engineering controls, administrative controls and personal protective equipment
9. Reporting, recordkeeping and access
10. Exclusion of COVID-19 cases
11. Return to work criteria

District COVID-19 Prevention Program

All Systems and procedures are available in either of the two State required plans:

1) Belleview Learning Continuity & Attendance Plan located at:

http://mybelleview.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2020_Learning_Continuity_and_Attendance_Plan_Belleview_Elementary_School_20201027-FINAL.pdf

2) Belleview Safe School Reopening Plan located at:

<http://mybelleview.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Belleview-School-Plan-for-Safe-Reopening-2020.pdf>

What to Do If You Are Sick

SICK WORKERS SHOULD FOLLOW CDC-RECOMMENDED STEPS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19. WORKERS WITH COVID-19 WHO HAVE STAYED HOME CAN STOP HOME ISOLATION AND RETURN TO WORK WHEN THEY HAVE MET ONE OF THE SETS OF CRITERIA FOUND HERE

What to Do If You Are Sick

[What to Do If You Are Sick](#)– CDC Updated Sept. 11, 2020

If you have a fever, cough or other symptoms, you might have COVID-19. Most people have mild illness and are able to recover at home. If you think you may have been exposed to COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider.

Keep track of your symptoms.

If you have an emergency warning sign (including trouble breathing), get emergency medical care immediately.

[CDC Self-checker](#): An online tool to help you make decisions and seek appropriate medical care

What to Do If You Are Sick

Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

Stay home except to get medical care. Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. Do not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.

Take care of yourself. Get rest and stay hydrated. Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.

Stay in touch with your doctor. Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you have trouble breathing, or have any other emergency warning signs, or if you think it is an emergency.

What to Do If You Are Sick

Avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Separate yourself from other people

As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people and pets in your home. If possible, you should use a separate bathroom. If you need to be around other people or animals in or outside of the home, wear a mask.

What to Do If You Are Sick

Tell your close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19. An infected person can spread COVID-19 starting 48 hours (or 2 days) before the person has any symptoms or tests positive. By letting your close contacts know they may have been exposed to COVID-19, you are helping to protect everyone.

Additional guidance is available for those living in close quarters and shared housing.

See COVID-19 and Animals if you have questions about pets.

What to Do If You Are Sick

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, someone from the health department may call you. Answer the call to slow the spread.

Monitor your symptoms - Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, or other symptoms.

Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and local health department. Your local health authorities may give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.

What to Do If You Are Sick

When to seek emergency medical attention

Look for emergency warning signs* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

What to Do If You Are Sick

Call ahead before visiting your doctor

- Many medical visits for routine care are being postponed or done by phone or telemedicine.
- If you have a medical appointment that cannot be postponed, call your doctor's office, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.

What to Do If You Are Sick

If you are sick, wear a mask over your nose and mouth

- You should wear a mask over your nose and mouth if you must be around other people or animals, including pets (even at home).
- You don't need to wear the mask if you are alone. If you can't put on a mask (because of trouble breathing, for example), cover your coughs and sneezes in some other way. Try to stay at least 6 feet away from other people. This will help protect the people around you.
- Masks should not be placed on young children under age 2 years, anyone who has trouble breathing, or anyone who is not able to remove the mask without help.

Note: During the COVID-19 pandemic, medical grade facemasks are reserved for healthcare workers and some first responders.

What to Do If You Are Sick

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw away used tissues in a lined trash can.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

What to Do If You Are Sick

Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Handwashing Tips

What to Do If You Are Sick

Avoid sharing personal household items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.
- Wash these items thoroughly after using them with soap and water or put in the dishwasher.

What to Do If You Are Sick

Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday

Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces in your “sick room” and bathroom; wear disposable gloves. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces in common areas, but you should clean your bedroom and bathroom, if possible.

If a caregiver or other person needs to clean and disinfect a sick person’s bedroom or bathroom, they should do so on an as-needed basis. The caregiver/other person should wear a mask and disposable gloves prior to cleaning. They should wait as long as possible after the person who is sick has used the bathroom before coming in to clean and use the bathroom.

High-touch surfaces include phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.

What to Do If You Are Sick

Clean and disinfect areas that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.

Use household cleaners and disinfectants. Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty. Then, use a household disinfectant.

- Be sure to follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product. Many products recommend keeping the surface wet for several minutes to ensure germs are killed. Many also recommend precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
- Most EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. A full list of disinfectants can be found [here](#).
- [Complete Disinfection Guidance](#)

When you can be around others after being sick with COVID-19

Deciding when you can be around others is different for different situations. Find out when you can safely end home isolation.

Discontinuing Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19:

- Accumulating evidence supports ending isolation and precautions for persons with COVID-19 using a symptom-based strategy. Specifically, researchers have reported that people with mild to moderate COVID-19 remain infectious no longer than 10 days after their symptoms began, and those with more severe illness or those who are severely immunocompromised remain infectious no longer than 20 days after their symptoms began. Therefore, CDC has updated the recommendations for discontinuing home isolation

When you can be around others after being sick with COVID-19

[Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms](#) and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue isolation under the following conditions:

- At least 10 days* have passed since symptom onset and
- At least 24 hours have passed since resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and
- Other symptoms have improved.

*A limited number of persons with severe illness may produce replication-competent virus beyond 10 days, that may warrant extending duration of isolation for up to 20 days after symptom onset. Consider consultation with infection control experts.

When you can be around others after being sick with COVID-19

Persons infected with SARS-CoV-2 who never develop COVID-19 symptoms may discontinue isolation and other precautions 10 days after the date of their first positive RT-PCR test for SARS-CoV-2 RNA.

COVID-19 Related Benefits

Workers' Compensation

Insert Employer's Policies & Procedures here...

Insert Employer's Point of Contact here

Federal Families First Coronavirus Response Act

Insert Employer's Policies & Procedures here...

FFCRA Leave information available at this site:

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/pandemic/ffcra-employee-paid-leave>

Insert Employer's Point of Contact here

Federal Leaves

Insert Employer's Policies & Procedures here...

Federal Leave information available at this site: <https://www.dol.gov/general/topic/benefits-leave#:~:text=The%20Family%20and%20Medical%20Leave,be%20maintained%20during%20the%20leave.>

Insert Employer's Point of Contact here

State Leaves

Insert Employer's Policies & Procedures here...

State Leave information available at this site: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/Comparison-COVID-19-Paid-Leave.html>

Insert Employer's Point of Contact here

Employer's Leaves

Insert Employer's Policies & Procedures to protect employees here...

Insert Employer's Point of Contact here

Coping with Stress

Coping with Stress

Coping with Stress – CDC Updated July 1, 2020

You or those you know may experience increased stress during this pandemic.

Public health actions, such as social distancing, can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety.

Coping with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.

Pandemics can be stressful

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic may be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions in adults and children.

Public health actions, such as social distancing, can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety.

However, these actions are necessary to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Coping with stress in a healthy way will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.

Pandemics can be stressful

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can sometimes cause the following:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on.
- Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
- Difficulty sleeping or concentrating.
- Worsening of chronic health problems.
- Worsening of mental health conditions.
- Increased use of tobacco, and/or alcohol and other substances.
- Take care of your mental health
- You may experience increased stress during this pandemic. Fear and anxiety can be overwhelming and cause strong emotions.

Get immediate help in a crisis

- Call 911
- [Disaster Distress Helpline](#) : 1-800-985-5990 (press 2 for Spanish), or text TalkWithUs for English or Hablanos for Spanish to 66746. Spanish speakers from Puerto Rico can text Hablanos to 1-787-339-2663.
- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) : 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish, or [Lifeline Crisis Chat](#) .
- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) : 1-800-799-7233 or text LOVEIS to 22522
- [National Child Abuse Hotline](#) : 1-800-4AChild (1-800-422-4453) or text 1-800-422-4453
- [National Sexual Assault Hotline](#) : 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) or [Online Chat](#)
- [The Eldercare Locator](#) : 1-800-677-1116 [TTY Instructions](#)
- [Veteran's Crisis Line](#) : 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or [Crisis Chat](#) or text: 8388255

Find a health care provider or treatment for substance use disorder and mental health

- [SAMHSA's National Helpline](#) : 1-800-662-HELP (4357) and TTY 1-800-487-4889
- [Treatment Services Locator Website](#)
- [Interactive Map of Selected Federally Qualified Health Centers](#)

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations

How you respond to stress during the COVID-19 pandemic can depend on your background, your social support from family or friends, your financial situation, your health and emotional background, the community you live in, and many other factors.

The changes that can happen because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ways we try to contain the spread of the virus can affect anyone.

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- People who are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19 (for example, older people, and people of any age with certain underlying medical conditions).
- Children and teens.
- People caring for family members or loved ones.
- Frontline workers such as health care providers and first responders,
- Essential workers who work in the food industry.

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- People who have existing mental health conditions.
- People who use substances or have a substance use disorder.
- People who have lost their jobs, had their work hours reduced, or had other major changes to their employment.
- People who have disabilities or developmental delay.
- People who are socially isolated from others, including people who live alone, and people in rural or frontier areas.

People who may respond more strongly to the stress of a crisis include:

- People in some racial and ethnic minority groups.
- People who do not have access to information in their primary language.
- People experiencing homelessness.
- People who live in congregate (group) settings.

Take care of yourself and your community

Taking care of your friends and your family can be a stress reliever, but it should be balanced with care for yourself.

[Helping others cope with their stress](#), such as by providing social support, can also make your community stronger.

During times of increased social distancing, people can still maintain social connections and care for their mental health.

Phone calls or video chats can help you and your loved ones feel socially connected, less lonely, or isolated.

Healthy ways to cope with stress

- Know what to do if you are sick and are concerned about COVID-19. Contact a health professional before you start any self-treatment for COVID-19.
- Know where and how to get treatment and other support services and resources, including counseling or therapy (in person or through telehealth services).
- [Take care of your emotional health](#). Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and react to the urgent needs to protect yourself and your family.
- Take breaks from watching, reading, or listening to news stories, including those on social media. Hearing about the pandemic repeatedly can be upsetting.

Healthy ways to cope with stress

Take care of your body.

- Take deep breaths, stretch, or [meditate](#).
- [Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals.](#)
- [Exercise regularly.](#)
- [Get plenty of sleep.](#)
- Avoid excessive [alcohol and drug use.](#)

Make time to unwind. Try to do some other activities you enjoy.

Healthy ways to cope with stress

Connect with others.

- Talk with people you trust about your concerns and how you are feeling.
- Connect with your community- or faith-based organizations. While social distancing measures are in place, consider connecting online, through social media, or by phone or mail.

Know the facts to help reduce stress

Knowing the facts about COVID-19 and [stopping the spread of rumors](#) can help reduce stress and stigma.

Understanding the risk to yourself and people you care about can help you connect with others and make an outbreak less stressful.

Take care of your mental health

[Mental health](#) is an important part of overall health and wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It may also affect how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices during an emergency.

People with pre-existing mental health conditions or substance use disorders may be particularly vulnerable in an emergency.

Mental health conditions (such as depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia) affect a person's thinking, feeling, mood or behavior in a way that influences their ability to relate to others and function each day.

These conditions may be situational (short-term) or long-lasting (chronic). People with preexisting mental health conditions should continue with their treatment and be aware of new or worsening symptoms. If you think you have new or worse symptoms, call your healthcare provider.

Call your healthcare provider

If stress gets in the way of your daily activities for several days in a row.

Free and confidential resources can also help you or a loved one connect with a skilled, trained counselor in your area.

Find a health care provider or treatment for substance use disorder and mental health

- [SAMHSA's National Helpline](#) : 1-800-662-HELP (4357) and TTY 1-800-487-4889
- [Treatment Services Locator Website](#)
- [Interactive Map of Selected Federally Qualified Health Centers](#)

Suicide

Different life experiences affect a person's risk for suicide. For example, suicide risk is higher among people who have experienced violence, including child abuse, bullying, or sexual violence. Feelings of isolation, depression, anxiety, and other emotional or financial stresses are known to raise the risk for suicide. People may be more likely to experience these feelings during a crisis like a pandemic.

However, there are ways to protect against suicidal thoughts and behaviors. For example, support from family and community, or feeling connected, and having access to in-person or virtual counseling or therapy can help with suicidal thoughts and behavior, particularly during a crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic.

Learn more about CDC's work in [suicide prevention](#)

Other Resources:

- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) : 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for English, 1-888-628-9454 for Spanish, or [Lifeline Crisis Chat](#) .
- [SAMHSA Suicide Prevention](#)
- [Suicide Risk Factors and Warning Signs](#)
- [Five Action Steps for Communicating with Someone Who May Be Suicidal](#)

Recovering from COVID-19 or ending home isolation

- It can be stressful to be separated from others if you have or were exposed to COVID-19. Each person ending a period of home isolation may feel differently about it.
- Emotional reactions may include:
 - Mixed emotions, including relief.
 - Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones.
 - Stress from the experience of having COVID-19 and monitoring yourself, or being monitored by others.
 - Sadness, anger, or frustration because friends or loved ones have fears of getting the disease from you, even though you are cleared to be around others.
 - Guilt about not being able to perform normal work or parenting duties while you had COVID-19.
 - Worry about getting re-infected or sick again even though you've already had COVID-19.
 - Other emotional or mental health changes.
- Children may also feel upset or have other strong emotions if they, or someone they know, has COVID-19, even if they are now better and able to be around others again.

Resources

For Everyone

- [How Right Now](#)
- [Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event](#)
- [HHS ASPR TRACIE COVID-19 Behavioral Health Resources](#)
- [Coronavirus Tax Relief and Economic Impact Payments](#)

Resources

For Communities

- [Coping with Stress During an Infectious Disease Outbreak](#)
- [Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health during an Infectious Disease Outbreak](#)

Resources

For Families and Children

- [Helping Children Cope during an COVID-19 Outbreak](#)
- [Helping Children Cope with Emergencies](#)
- [Coping After a Disaster](#) – A Ready Wrigley activity book for children age 3-10
- [Teen Depression](#)

Resources

For People at Higher Risk for Serious Illness

- [Serious Illness Care Program COVID-19 Response Toolkit](#)

Resources

For Healthcare Workers and First Responders

- [Healthcare Personnel and First Responders: How to Cope with Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)
- [Emergency Responders: Tips for Taking Care of Yourself](#)
- [Disaster Technical Assistance Center](#) (SAMHSA)

For Other Workers

- [Employees: How to Cope with Job Stress and Build Resilience During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

Contact your District for additional information or questions

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