

Four Things You Need to Know

PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM COVID-19

The novel coronavirus disease, also known as COVID-19, is a respiratory infection caused by a new virus that was first identified in late 2019.

Experts believe the virus that causes COVID-19 is spread through an infected person's sneezing or coughing droplets. They also believe it can be transmitted when people touch infected surfaces then touch their own mouth, nose or eyes – but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

While there is currently no vaccine, there are things you can do to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

WASH YOUR HANDS

Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds with soap and water.

If soap is not available, use hand sanitizer that is made up of **at least 60% alcohol**.

Don't touch your face or eyes.



AVOID CLOSE CONTACT

Stay at home as much as possible. It minimizes the chance you could be exposed to the virus and prevents the spread of the disease to people who could become very ill – older adults, people with underlying health conditions or those with asthma.

If you do go out, try to **minimize your trips** and **practice social distancing** – stay 6 feet away from others. Use a cloth face covering over your mouth and nose.

Follow the guidance of local public health officials for recommendations in your community.

It is very important to avoid close contact with people who are sick.



PROTECT OTHERS IF YOU ARE SICK

Cover your coughs or sneezes and wash your hands right away.

If you are sick, it is important that you stay home. Call your health care provider and tell them your symptoms. They will give you guidance on what to do next and let you know where tests are available in your community.



You should try to separate yourself from others in your home, and do not share household items such as drinking glasses, utensils or towels. Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches or cabinet handles.

WHAT EXPERTS ARE DOING

Infectious diseases physicians, scientists and public health experts affiliated with the Infectious Diseases Society of America, the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization are working in several areas related to COVID-19, including:

- **Providing guidance** to hospitals and health care providers;
- **Working closely with local, state, national and global partners** to provide accurate information and clinical guidance;
- **Providing resources and expertise** to contain the outbreak;
- **Researching diagnostic tests** that may be able to better detect the disease; and
- **Studying the spread of COVID-19** to better understand how to protect the public.

IDSA provides up-to-date information through its online [COVID-19 Resource Center](https://idsociety.org/covid-19).