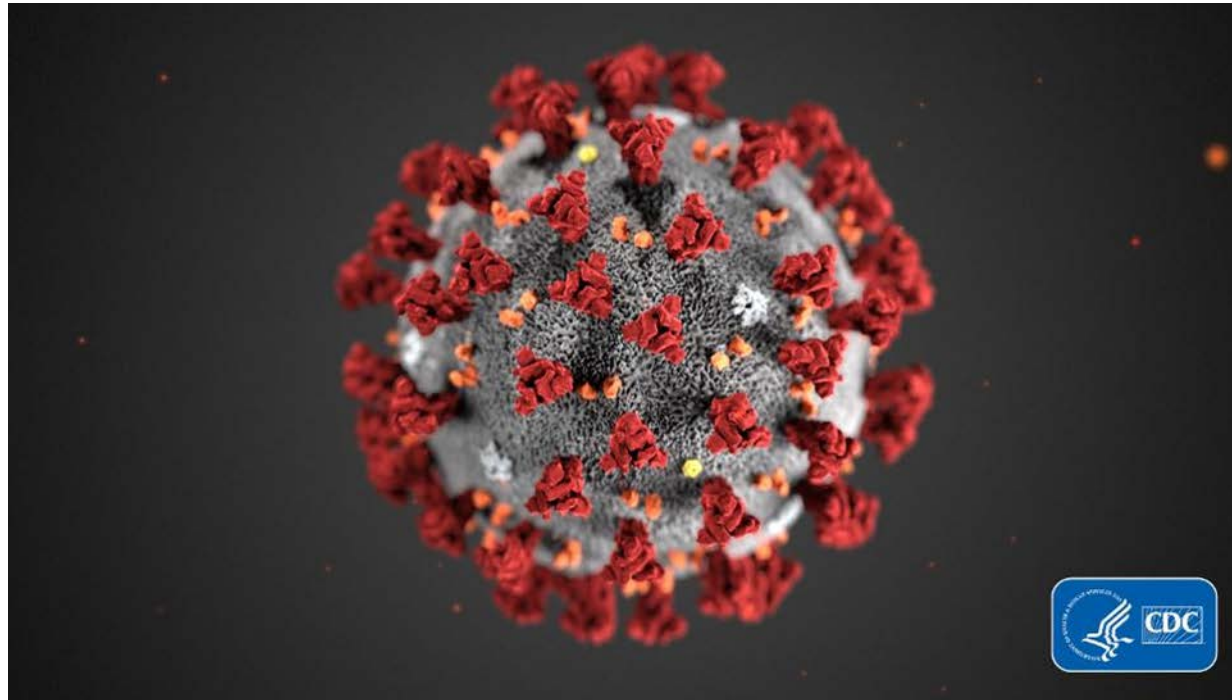
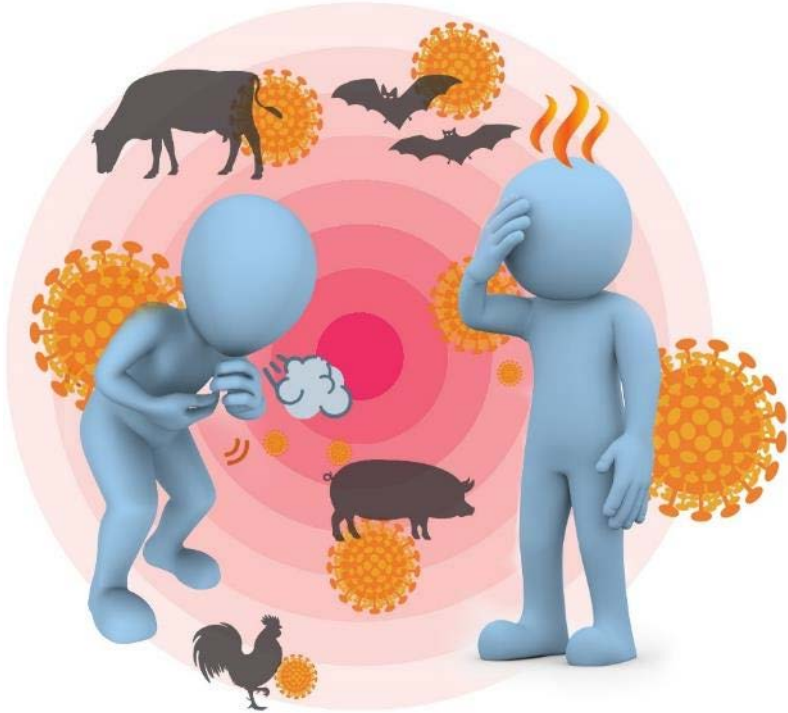


Sanitation and Social Distancing in Public Transportation



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Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome- Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) causes COVID-19



- SARS-CoV-2 is a new virus.
- The first cases were identified in people with **pneumonia** in Wuhan, China, in late December 2019.
- It probably started in animals but is now spreading between people.
- As this virus is new, we are learning more all the time, and what we know now may change.

Sources: World Health Organization Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)
Situation Report – 94 April 23, 2020

National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD),
Division of Viral Diseases Last Updated September 1, 2020

Travelers brought the virus into other countries from China

- Many countries have now detected the virus in travelers.
- Some people who were in contact with these travelers were infected by them.
- Almost every location has recorded cases of COVID-19.
- Although there is a lot we don't know yet about this new virus, we can still prevent the disease.



How is COVID-19 spread?

Current research indicates that coronavirus spreads in two primary ways:

- when you're in close contact to an infected person (within about six feet) for 15 minutes or more ***over a period of 24 hours***, and
- when tiny droplets from an infected person's cough or sneeze get into your mouth, nose, or eyes. Keep in mind that these droplets are tiny, often invisible, and you can't feel them.



How is COVID-19 spread?

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.
- Many factors can affect the chances that infection will spread from one person to another. These factors include whether one or both people are wearing masks, whether the infected person is coughing or showing other symptoms, and whether the encounter occurred indoors or outdoors. Though the "15 minutes within six feet rule" is a helpful guideline, it's always best to minimize close interactions with people who are not members of your household.



How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 most commonly spreads during close contact.

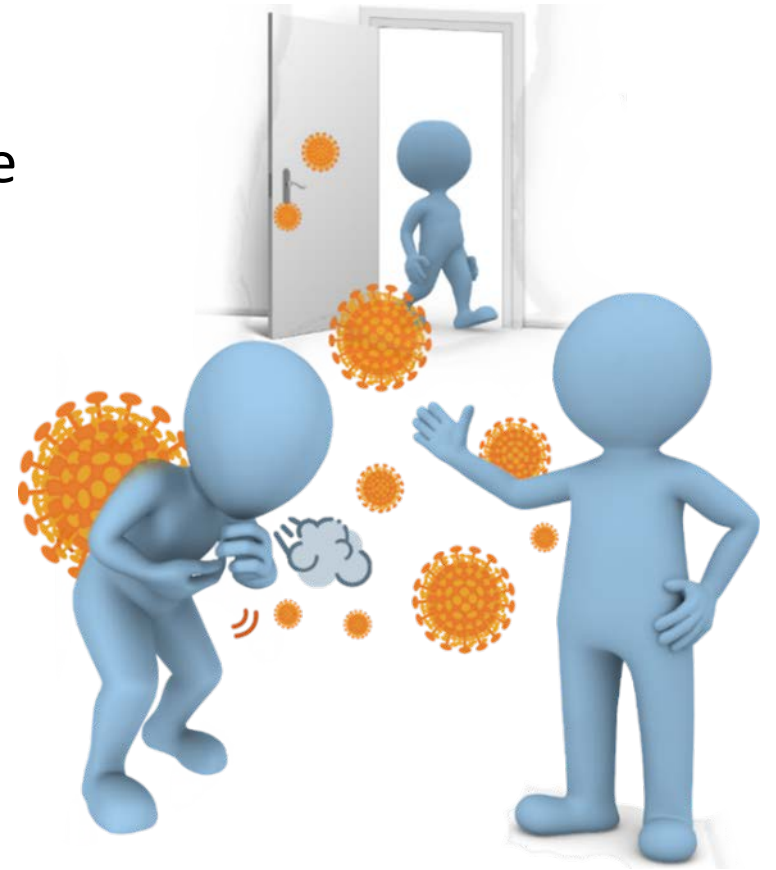
- People who are physically near (within 6 feet) a person with COVID-19 or have direct contact with that person are at greatest risk of infection.
- When people with COVID-19 cough, sneeze, sing, talk, or breathe they produce **respiratory droplets**. These droplets can range in size from larger droplets (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.



How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 most commonly spreads during close contact.

- 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.



How is COVID-19 spread?

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.



How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 can sometimes be spread by airborne transmission.

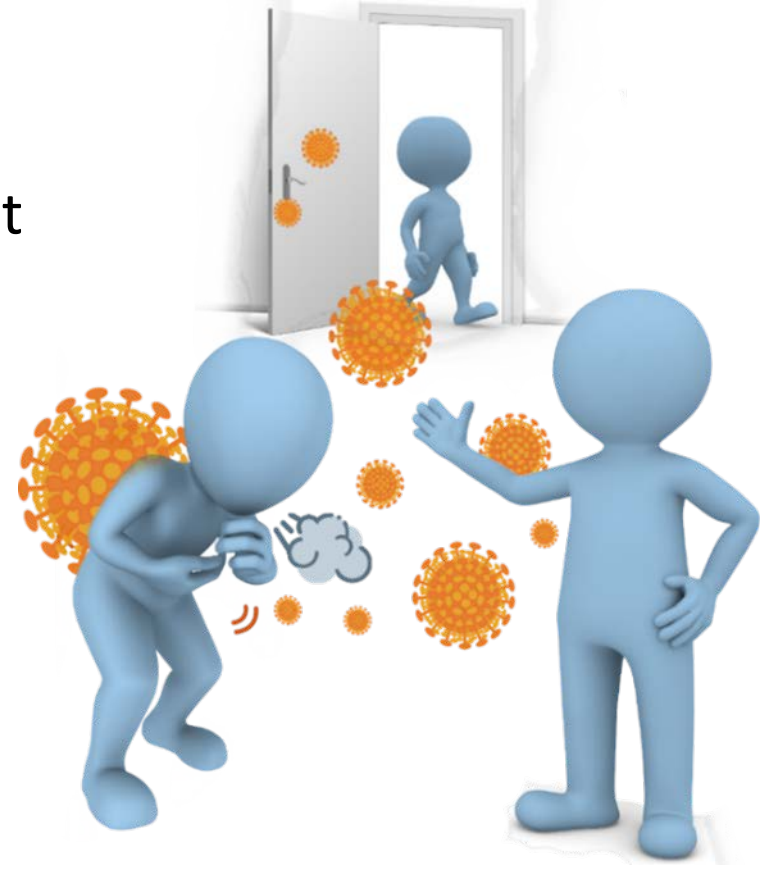
- There is evidence that under certain conditions, people with COVID-19 seem to have infected others who were more than 6 feet away. These transmissions occurred within enclosed spaces that had inadequate ventilation. Sometimes the infected person was breathing heavily, for example while singing or exercising.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



How is COVID-19 spread?

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.



How is COVID-19 spread?

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.
- At this time, the risk of COVID-19 spreading **from animals to people** is considered to be low.



Symptoms of Coronavirus



What you need to know.

- Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.
- **Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions** like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.
- **Children** can be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, can get sick from COVID-19, and can spread the virus that causes COVID-19 to others. Children, like adults, who have COVID-19 but have no symptoms (“asymptomatic”) can still spread the virus to others.

Symptoms start like many other illnesses

Common symptoms are:

1. Fever
2. Chills including rigors (chills with shaking)
3. Fatigue
4. Cough
5. Sore throat
6. Shortness of breath and breathing difficulty

Symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure.

Some people have no symptoms, **most** have a mild illness. It can be severe and sometimes fatal.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

Less common symptoms

1. Headache / muscle aches
2. Diarrhea
3. Sudden loss of sense of smell and taste
4. Abnormal heart rhythm and heart failure
5. Stroke

Many patients recover fully in about 2 weeks. In others, some symptoms like breathlessness and fatigue may continue for weeks.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.

Diagnosis and treatment



Because symptoms are similar to many other illnesses, tests are needed to make the diagnosis (nose/ throat swab, blood test).

There is no specific treatment.

Mild symptoms can be treated with medicine to lower the fever, or relieve pain.

If symptoms are more severe, treatment in hospital is required.



Diagnosis and treatment - UPDATE



The U.S. Food & Drug Administration (FDA) recognizes that patients affected by COVID-19 are in great need of medicines to treat this disease. On October 22, 2020 the FDA **approved** Veklury (remdesivir) for use in adults and pediatric patients 12 years of age and older and weighing at least 40 kg (about 88 pounds) requiring hospitalization. The approval was based on findings that hospitalized patients who got Veklury (remdesivir) recovered faster.

This approval does not include the entire population that had been authorized to use Veklury under a mechanism called **emergency use authorization (EUA), which is not the same as approval**. FDA also revised the EUA for Veklury, originally issued on May 1, 2020, to permit the drug's use for treatment of suspected or laboratory confirmed COVID-19 in hospitalized pediatric patients weighing 3.5 kg (7.7 lbs.) to less than 40 kg (88 lbs.) **or** hospitalized pediatric patients less than 12 years of age weighing at least 3.5 kg (7.7 lbs.).



How can you protect yourself?

Here are three actions you can take to reduce the likelihood that you'll get infected:

1) Keep your distance. Try to stay about six feet away from anyone who's sick. If there are cases of COVID-19 spreading in your community, try to stay at least six feet away from most people. When you can, stay home; that will keep you away from people who could be infected even if they don't have any symptoms yet.

2) Clean your hands often. The best way to clean your hands is to wash them with soap and water for 20 seconds. If you can't wash, rub a hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol over all the surfaces of your hands until they are dry.

3) Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Be mindful about keeping your hands away from your face.



Avoid exposure

- Maintain social /physical distance - keep 3-6 feet (1-2 metres) away from others, even if they appear well.
- Avoid activities which expose you to large groups of people.
- Maintain social distance while greeting visitors. Avoid shaking hands, kissing or hugging.
- Work from home, where possible.
- Avoid non-essential travel.
- Keep away from people who are sick – don't let them cough or sneeze on you.
- Avoid visiting hospitals and other medical facilities unless you need medical care.



How can you protect others?

Even if you haven't been exposed to the virus, the actions you take to slow its spread can help protect your family, co-workers, friends, and the elderly or vulnerable folks in your community. When we slow the spread, fewer people will become sick at any given time. This delay makes it possible for our healthcare system to take good care of everyone.

Here's what you can do:

- 1) **Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue.** Then throw out the tissue and wash your hands. If you don't have a tissue, cough into the inside of your elbow; make sure your mouth and nose are close to your elbow.
- 2) **Clean and disinfect.** Use a disinfecting wipe or spray and wipe down door handles, sinks and toilet handles, shared tools, phones, etc.
- 3) **Stay home if you're sick.** If you think you've been exposed to coronavirus, or if you have symptoms of COVID-19, call your healthcare provider. He or she will be able to give you specific and up-to-date information on what to do in your community.



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

Wash your hands frequently. Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Many diseases and conditions are spread by not washing hands with soap and clean, running water.

- 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.



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

CDC recommends cleaning hands in a specific way to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.

- **Why?** Because hands could become re-contaminated if placed in a basin of standing water that has been contaminated through previous use, clean running water should be used. However, washing with non-potable water when necessary may still improve health. The temperature of the water does not appear to affect microbe removal; however, warmer water may cause more skin irritation and is more environmentally costly.



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

CDC recommends cleaning hands in a specific way to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.

- Turning off the faucet after wetting hands saves water, and there are few data to prove whether significant numbers of germs are transferred between hands and the faucet.
- Using soap to wash hands is more effective than using water alone because the surfactants in soap lift soil and microbes from skin, and people tend to scrub hands more thoroughly when using soap, which further removes germs.



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.

- **Why?** Lathering and scrubbing hands creates friction, which helps lift dirt, grease, and microbes from skin. Microbes are present on all surfaces of the hand, often in particularly high concentration under the nails, so the entire hand should be scrubbed.



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star" song from beginning to end.

- **Why?** Determining the optimal length of time for handwashing is difficult because few studies about the health impacts of altering handwashing times have been done. Nonetheless, evidence suggests that washing hands for about 15-30 seconds removes more germs from hands than washing for shorter periods.

"Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star"



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

Rinse your hands well under clean, running water.



- **Why?** Soap and friction help lift dirt, grease, and microbes—including disease-causing germs—from skin so they can then be rinsed off of hands. Rinsing the soap away also minimizes skin irritation. Because hands could become re-contaminated if rinsed in a basin of standing water that has been contaminated through previous use, clean running water should be used. While some recommendations include using a paper towel to turn off the faucet after hands have been rinsed, this practice leads to increased use of water and paper towels, and there are no studies to show that it improves health.

To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

Dry your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

- **Why?** Germs can be transferred more easily to and from wet hands; therefore, hands should be dried after washing. However, the best way to dry hands remains unclear because few studies about hand drying exist, and the results of these studies conflict. Additionally, most of these studies compare overall concentrations of microbes, not just disease-causing germs, on hands following different hand-drying methods. It has not been shown that removing microbes from hands is linked to better health. **Nonetheless, studies suggest that using a clean towel or air drying hands are best.**



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

It's especially important to wash your hands:

- 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



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.



Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not readily available.

- CDC recommends consumers use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 70% alcohol. Hand sanitizers are over-the-counter (OTC) drugs regulated by FDA.
- Hand sanitizer should be stored out of reach, and sight, of children. It should not be stored above 105°F (for example, it should not be stored in a car during the summer months).
- Hand sanitizer is flammable and should be stored away from heat or flame. Hand sanitizer should be rubbed into the hands until they feel completely dry before continuing activities that may involve heat, sparks, static electricity, or open flames.

To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

- Cover your coughs and sneezes. Use a tissue or your upper sleeve. Immediately throw the tissue in a bin and wash your hands.

Note: Handkerchiefs tend to get damp after wiping or blowing your nose a few times. And keeping a moist piece of fabric, saturated with saliva and mucus, in your handbag or pocket for a whole day can be somewhat off-putting – as well as unhygienic.

Besides, handkerchiefs, especially after being used a number of times, can lead to germs spreading to other surfaces or even other people – especially since most of us don't wash our hands or use hand sanitizer every time after using our handkerchief.



To prevent COVID-19 maintain good hygiene.

Cover your mouth and nose with a mask/face covering/ fabric mask when around others, especially when it is difficult to maintain 3-6 feet (1-2 metres) distance from others. **Follow local guidelines.**

- 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.



More on use of masks

- **Follow local guidelines**
- Wear a mask:
 - When in face-to-face contact with others.
 - When social distancing cannot be achieved.
 - If you are in the high-risk groups.
 - When coughing or sneezing.
 - When caring for a sick person.
 - Within a healthcare facility or other public spaces.
- Masks alone don't protect – they should be used along with other hygiene measures.
- Follow manufacturer's advice for using the mask.



Masks reduce the risk of the wearer spreading the virus.

More on use of masks



- Wear masks with two or more layers to stop the spread of COVID-19
- Wear the mask over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Masks should be worn by people two years and older
- Masks should NOT be worn by children younger than two, people who have trouble breathing, or people who cannot remove the mask without assistance
- Do **NOT** wear masks intended for healthcare workers, for example, N95 respirators
- CDC does not recommend the use of gaiters or face shields. Evaluation of these face covers is on-going but effectiveness is unknown at this time.

More on use of masks

How do the different types of masks work?



N95 masks

Actually a type of respirator, an N95 mask offers more protection than a surgical mask does because it can filter out both large and small particles when the wearer inhales. As the name indicates, the mask is designed to block 95% of very small particles.

Health care providers must be trained and pass a fit test to confirm a proper seal before using an N95 respirator in the workplace. Like surgical masks, N95 masks are intended to be disposable. However, researchers are testing ways to disinfect N95 masks so they can be reused.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) **does not recommend** that the general public wear N95 respirators to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including coronavirus (COVID-19).

More on use of masks

How do the different types of masks work?

Masks with Exhalation Valves or Vents

The purpose of masks is to keep respiratory droplets from reaching others to aid with source control. However, masks with one-way valves or vents allow air to be exhaled through a hole in the material, which can result in expelled respiratory droplets that can reach others. This type of mask does not prevent the person wearing the mask from transmitting COVID-19 to others.

Therefore, CDC **does not recommend** using masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent.



More on use of masks

How do the different types of masks work?

Surgical masks

Also called a medical mask, a surgical mask is a loose-fitting disposable mask that protects the wearer's nose and mouth from contact with droplets, splashes and sprays that may contain germs. A surgical mask also filters out large particles in the air. Surgical masks may protect others by reducing exposure to the saliva and respiratory secretions of the mask wearer.

At this time, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has not approved any type of surgical mask specifically for protection against the coronavirus, but these masks may provide some protection when other types of masks are not available.

These masks are single-use only.



More on use of masks



How do the different types of masks work?

Cloth masks

Fabric or cloth masks trap droplets that are released when the person wearing the mask sneezes, coughs or talks. They reduce the spread of viruses, are easy to purchase or make, and can be washed and worn again. It's also important for the wearer to avoid touching their masks, and if they do, to sanitize or wash their hands after. Additionally, if a cloth or fabric mask becomes wet or dirty, it's important to switch to a clean one.

These masks should not be shared.

More on use of masks

How to Select

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

DO choose masks that



Have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric



Completely cover your nose and mouth



Fit snugly against the sides of your face and don't have gaps

DO NOT choose masks that



Are made of fabric that makes it hard to breathe, for example, vinyl



Have exhalation valves or vents, which allow virus particles to escape

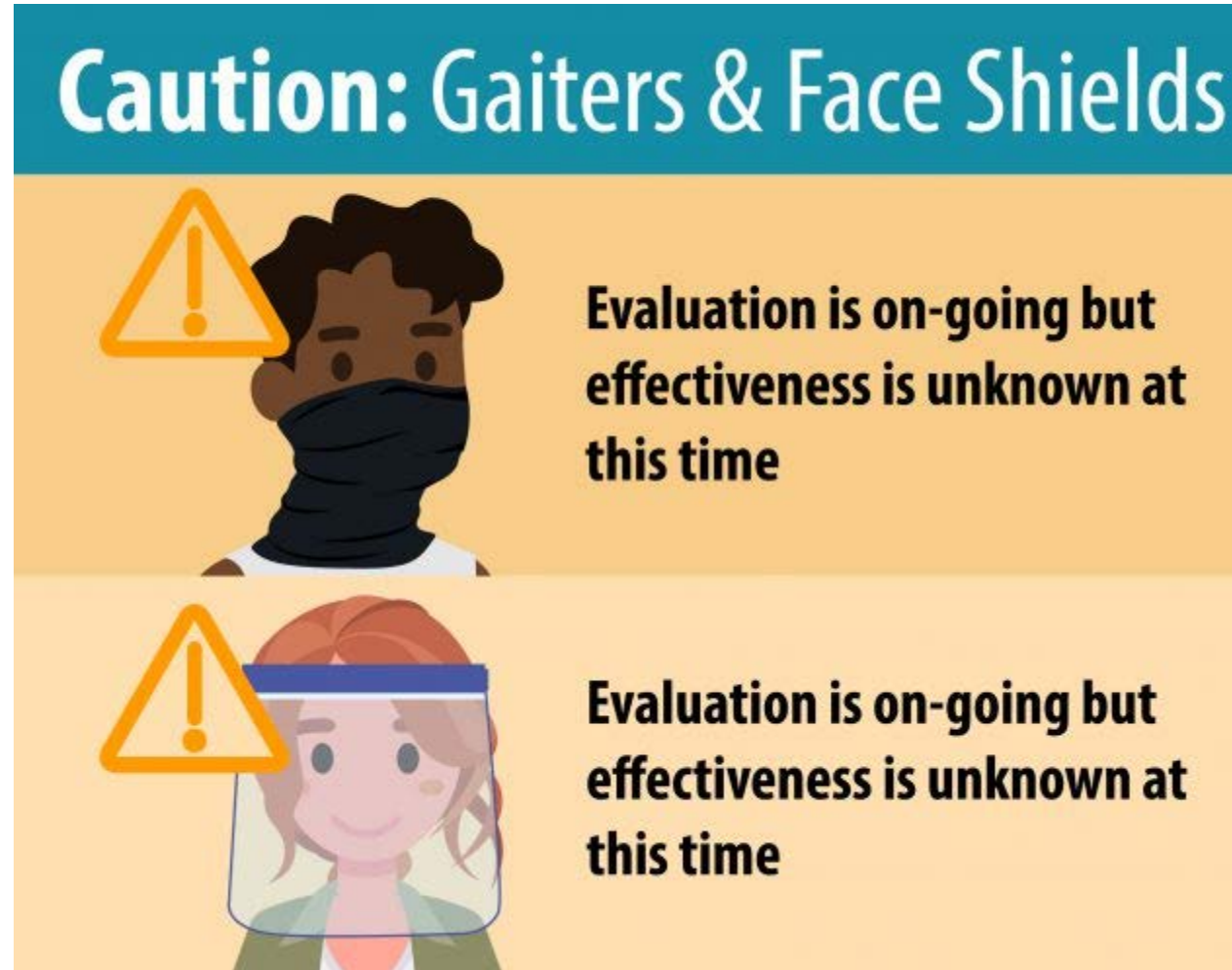


Are intended for healthcare workers, including N95 respirators or surgical masks

More on use of masks

How to Select

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.



More on use of masks

How to Select

When selecting a mask, there are many choices. Here are some do's and don'ts.

Special Situations: Children



If you are able, find a mask that is made for children



If you can't find a mask made for children, check to be sure the mask fits snugly over the nose and mouth and under the chin



Do NOT put on children younger than 2 years old

Special Situations: Glasses



If you wear glasses, find a mask that fits closely over your nose or one that has a nose wire to limit fogging

More on use of masks

How to Wear a Mask

Wear a mask **correctly** and **consistently** for the best protection.

- Be sure to wash your hands before putting on a mask
- Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
- Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
- Make sure you can breathe easily
- Do **NOT** touch the mask when wearing it
- CDC does not recommend use of masks or cloth masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent



More on use of masks

How NOT to wear a mask



Around your neck



On your forehead



Under your nose



Only on your nose



On your chin



Dangling from one ear



On your arm

More on use of masks

How to take off a mask



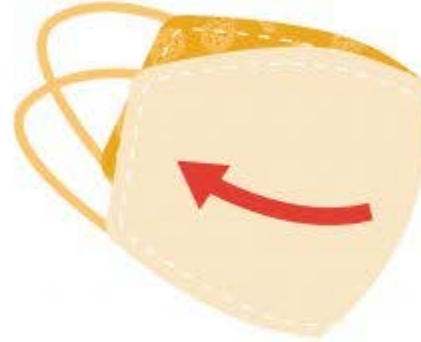
1

Carefully, untie the strings behind your head or stretch the ear loops



2

Handle only by the ear loops or ties



3

Fold outside corners together



4

Be careful not to touch your eyes, nose, and mouth when removing and wash hands immediately after removing

More on use of masks

How to Clean

Cloth masks should be washed regularly. Always remove mask correctly and wash your hands after handling or touching a used mask.

Washing machine

- Include your mask with your regular laundry
- Use regular laundry detergent and the warmest appropriate water setting for the cloth used to make the mask
- Use the highest heat setting and leave in the dryer until completely dry.



More on use of masks

How to Clean

Washing by hand

- Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection. Some bleach products, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing, may not be suitable for disinfection.
 - Use bleach containing 5.25%–8.25% sodium hypochlorite. Do not use a bleach product if the percentage is not in this range or is not specified.
 - Ensure the bleach product is not past its expiration date. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser.
 - Ensure adequate ventilation.



More on use of masks

How to Clean Washing by hand



- Prepare a bleach solution by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per gallon of room temperature water or
 - 4 teaspoons of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per quart of room temperature water
- Soak the mask in the bleach solution for 5 minutes.
- Discard the bleach solution down the drain and rinse the mask thoroughly with cool or room temperature water.



More on use of masks

How to Clean

Using bleach safely:

- Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use.
- Be aware that bleach can damage cloth fabric over time.
- Wear skin protection and consider eye protection for potential splash hazards.
- Use water at room temperature for dilution (unless stated otherwise on the label).
- Store and use bleach out of the reach of children and pets.
- Special considerations should be made for people with asthma and they should not be present when cleaning and disinfecting is happening as this can trigger asthma exacerbations. Learn more about reducing asthma triggers.



More on use of masks

How to Clean

Washing by hand

Air Dry

- Lay flat and allow to completely dry. If possible, place the mask in direct sunlight after washing.



More on use of masks

Tips for adjusting to a face mask



It can be challenging to get used to wearing a face mask. Here are some tips for making the transition:

- **Start slow.** Wear your mask at home for a short time, such as while watching television. Then wear it during a short walk. Slowly increase the time until you feel more comfortable.
- **Find your fit.** If your mask isn't comfortable or is too difficult to breathe through, consider other options. Masks come in a variety of styles and sizes.

If these tips don't help or you have concerns about wearing a mask, talk with your doctor about how to protect yourself and others during the pandemic.

Face Shields



- A face shield **is primarily used for eye protection** for the person wearing it. At this time, it is not known what level of protection a face shield provides to people nearby from the spray of respiratory droplets from the wearer. There is currently not enough evidence to support the effectiveness of face shields for source control. Therefore, CDC **does not currently recommend** use of face shields as a substitute for masks.
- However, wearing a mask may not be feasible in every situation for some people for example, people who are deaf or hard of hearing—or those who care for or interact with a person who is hearing impaired. Here are some considerations for individuals who must wear a face shield instead of a mask:
 - Although evidence on face shields is limited, the available data suggest that the following face shields may provide better source control than others:
 - Face shields that wrap around the sides of the wearer's face and extend below the chin.
 - Hooded face shields.
 - Face shield wearers should wash their hands before and after removing the face shield and avoid touching their eyes, nose and mouth when removing it.
 - Disposable face shields should only be worn for a single use and disposed of according to manufacturer instructions.
 - Reusable face shields should be cleaned and disinfected after each use according to manufacturer instructions or by following CDC face shield cleaning instructions.

Plastic face shields for newborns and infants are NOT recommended.

Neck Gaiters

Experts say how a neck gaiter is made and what material is used determines how effective the face coverings are against the novel coronavirus. Neck gaiters can provide a comfortable and stylish way for people to cover their faces during the COVID-19 pandemic. But that doesn't mean they are effectively protecting against the spread of the novel coronavirus. In a new study (August 7, 2020) from Duke University in North Carolina, researchers concluded that fleece neck gaiters made from a **polyester and spandex** blend aren't effective in blocking coronavirus droplets. These respiratory droplets are transmitted when we talk, cough, sing, sneeze, and yawn. Neck gaiters made out of polyester or spandex only are not recommended. There needs to be a multiple cotton layer to be effective.



Neck Gaiters – UPDATE

(October 2, 2020) University of Georgia researchers have demonstrated that neck gaiters can provide a level of protection equivalent to masks when used as a face covering.

The gaiters were compared to no mask at all, as well as to multiple two-layer, washable, breathable cloth masks, as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Study results showed:

- Single-layer gaiters (polyester, spandex and nylon) provided a 77% average reduction in respiratory droplets compared to wearing no face covering at all.
- Two-layer gaiters (cotton and spandex) provided an 81% average reduction in respiratory droplets compared to wearing no face covering at all.
- Multi-layer gaiters (polyester and spandex) provided a 96% average reduction in respiratory droplets compared to wearing no face covering at all.



Neck Gaiters – UPDATE

The study hasn't yet been published or peer-reviewed, but it sheds light into potential options as people don face coverings this fall.

According to CDC recommendations last updated on Aug. 27, the ideal face covering should have two or more layers of washable, breathable fabric and completely cover the mouth and nose. The CDC urges caution for gaiters, saying that “evaluation is ongoing but effectiveness is unknown at this time.”

“The level of protection provided by a face covering appears to be substantially driven by the number and quality of layers of material and not whether it's in the form of a gaiter or a mask,” Suraj Sharma, the lead author said in a news release.

NOTE: CDC does not recommend the use of gaiters or face shields. Evaluation of these face covers is on-going but effectiveness is unknown at this time.



To prevent COVID-19

Maintain good hygiene

- Avoid touching shared objects (light switches, handrails, door handles etc.) as much as possible. If you must touch such objects, wash your hands or use sanitizer promptly afterwards. Ensure you do not touch your face.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces each day, more often if you think they've been contaminated. Use normal cleaning supplies.
- Do not share food, drinks and personal items including mobile phones.



To prevent COVID-19

Coronavirus on Surfaces: What's the Real Risk?



Researchers have found that the coronavirus can stay alive on surfaces. A *New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM)* study from April 2020 showed that COVID-19 can survive on plastic and stainless steel for up to 3 days, and on cardboard for up to 1 day. Another study from China found that the virus can travel on the soles of shoes.

So can you really catch COVID-19 from touching surfaces?

It is theoretically possible, but highly unlikely, says Dean Blumberg, MD, chief of pediatric infectious diseases at UC Davis Children's Hospital. "You'd need a unique sequence of events," he says. First, someone would need to get a large enough amount of the virus on a surface to cause infection. Then, the virus would need to survive long enough for you to touch that surface and get some on your hands. Then, without washing your hands, you'd have to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Also, studies have only proved that the virus stays alive on surfaces -- not that you can catch it from touching those surfaces. "They don't prove that just because it can survive on a surface, it can be transmitted that way," Blumberg says.

Sources: N Engl J Med 2020; 382:1564-1567

[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)

updated 09/11/2020

[webmd.com/coronavirus-on-surfaces](https://www.webmd.com/coronavirus-on-surfaces) updated 09/03/2020

To prevent COVID-19



Contaminated surfaces aren't the highest COVID-19 risk.

Coronaviruses on surfaces and objects naturally die within hours to days to weeks. Warmer temperatures and exposure to sunlight will reduce the time the virus survives on surfaces and objects. Normal routine cleaning with soap and water removes germs and dirt from surfaces.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

In addition to environmental conditions, a confounding factor might be saliva, or the stuff that we often mean when we talk about droplets sticking onto surfaces.

To prevent COVID-19

Contaminated surfaces aren't the highest COVID-19 risk.



Consider, Anne Wyllie, a microbiologist at Yale University says, the extraordinary chain of events that would need to happen to successfully spread SARS-CoV-2 on a surface. A sufficiently large amount of the virus would need to be sprayed by an infected person onto a surface. The surface would need to be the right kind of material, exposed to the right levels of light, temperature, and humidity so that the virus does not quickly degrade.

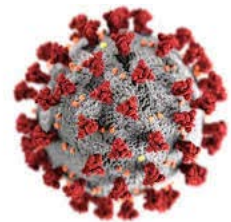
Then the virus would need to be picked up—which you would most likely do with your hands. But the virus is vulnerable there. (“Enveloped” viruses like SARS-CoV-2 do not fare well on porous surfaces like skin and clothing.)

And then it needs to find a way inside you—usually through your nose or your eye—in a concentration big enough to get past your mucosal defenses and establish itself in your cells. The risk, Wyllie concludes, is low. “I’ve not once washed my groceries or disinfected my bags or even thought twice about my mail,” she says. Low risk is not, of course, no risk, she adds.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

COVID-19 is a new disease and we are still learning about it. Here's what we currently know:

- The virus that causes COVID-19 mainly spreads from person-to-person through respiratory droplets:
 - Between people who are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more).
 - Produced when a person who is infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- You can get the virus from people who don't seem sick or don't have any symptoms.
- You might be able to get COVID-19 by shaking someone's hand or touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching your face, mouth, nose, or eyes.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

As a paratransit operator, you might be exposed to the virus at your job when

- In close contact (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more) with guests or passengers
 - Coming into close and often physical contact as passengers board or exit the vehicle and, in some cases, as you assist and secure passengers.
- Touching or handling frequently touched items (such as the cashbox, cash, car keys, wheelchair lifts, wheelchair securements, steering wheel, handrails, or door handles) and then touching your face, mouth, nose, or eyes.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Stay home if you are having symptoms of COVID-19.

- Follow CDC recommended steps if you are sick.
- Notify your employer if you test positive for COVID-19.
- Do not return to work until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met.
 - Talk with your healthcare provider about when it's safe for you to return to work.
- Follow CDC recommended precautions and tell your supervisor if you or someone you live with or someone you have had recent close contact with has COVID-19.

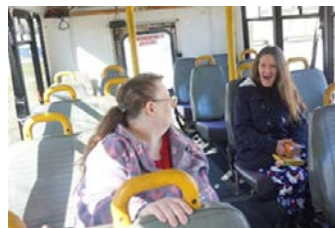


COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others – **SOCIAL DISTANCING**

Stay at least 6 feet away from passengers and coworkers, when possible.

- Avoid entering homes and facilities to aid passengers, if possible.
- Seat passengers in the seats farthest from you, and have them use available rear entry doors. If only one entrance is available and you are not assisting the passenger, you can exit the vehicle before a passenger enters or exits it to maintain social distance.
- Use a larger vehicle, such as a cutaway bus or van when feasible, to allow greater physical distance between vehicle occupants. If possible, block the seats closest to your driver's seat to ensure social distancing.
- Limit passenger loads whenever possible, unless passengers are immediate family or personal aides.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators – **DRIVER COMPARTMENT BARRIERS**

Use of impermeable **barriers** can act as an engineering control that provide supplemental protection to both customers and employees if used. The **purpose** of these partitions is to ensure that one user's breathing zone is not contaminated by exhalations from another.

1. Purpose of Barriers as a Control - The purpose of physical spatial distancing is to prevent disease transmission. Use of impermeable barriers can act as an engineering control that provide supplemental protection to both customers and employees if used. The purpose of these partitions is to ensure that one user's breathing zone is not contaminated by exhalations from another.
2. Physical Characteristics of Barriers – Barriers must be made of impermeable, cleanable, and durable materials that can be frequently cleaned, and of a suitable height and width to intercept droplets (i.e. plexiglass or acrylic).
3. Height and Width of Barrier - The height of a barrier must take into account the tallest user and the width should be as wide as the surface will allow. In general, the height of the barrier should provide 6 feet of protection as measured from the floorboard. If openings are needed to allow limited interactions (e.g. a cash slot), the slots should be as small as possible and should be placed off-center, rather than directly in front of the persons face.
4. Cleaning and Disinfection – Clean and disinfect barriers frequently throughout the day and as often as needed, using products approved for use against COVID-19 on the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved list and follow product instructions:
<https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/listndisinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2>.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators – **DRIVER COMPARTMENT BARRIERS**

Some agencies are doing this by using shower curtains or other full-length clear plastic draping. Other systems are cordoning off several front rows of seats from use to create a six-foot barrier between driver and passengers.



Photo: ctaa.org

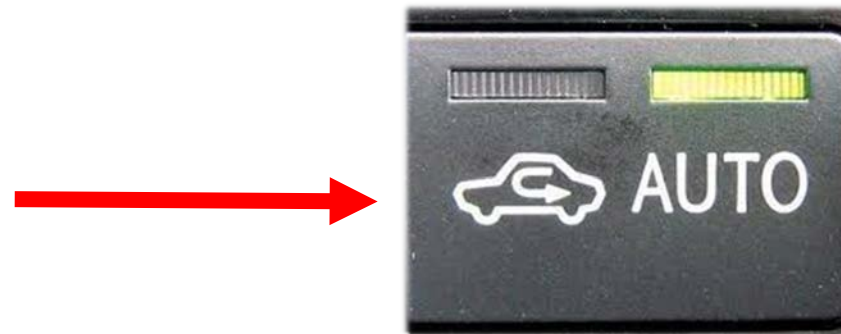


Photo: Shauna.Miller@itd.idaho.gov

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Based on guidance from the CDC, drivers should close doors/windows between driver/passenger compartments before bringing the rider on board, and use open windows or the ventilation system in non-recirculated mode to allow for proper and safe ventilation/air circulation within the vehicle. CDC recommends isolating drivers from passengers when possible by keeping pass-through doors and windows shut. In addition, CDC guidelines recommend using vehicles that have isolated driver and passenger compartments that can provide separate ventilation to each area.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Wear a cloth mask in public and at work, even when social distancing.

Cloth masks may prevent people who don't know they have the virus from spreading it to others. The spread of COVID-19 can be reduced when cloth masks are used along with other preventative measures, including social distancing. A universal face covering policy can be effective in preventing the transmission of the virus in close contact interactions.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Wear a cloth mask in public and at work, even when social distancing.

- Be careful when putting on, wearing, and taking off cloth mask:
 - Do not touch your cloth mask while wearing it.
 - Do not touch your face, mouth, nose, or eyes while taking off the cloth mask.
 - Wash your hands before putting on and after taking off the cloth mask.
 - Wash the mask after each use.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Wear a cloth mask in public and at work, even when social distancing.

- If you are concerned about the use of cloth masks at your workplace, discuss them with your employer.
- Consider carrying a spare cloth mask.
- Ask passengers to wear cloth masks unless they are having trouble breathing, they cannot put on or remove a cloth mask on their own, or they are under the age of 2.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects or surfaces.

- If possible, clean and disinfect more frequently, such as between passengers. Clean and disinfect the following areas on a routine basis or at least daily:
 - Car keys, wheelchair lifts, wheelchair securements, steering wheels, handrails, door handles, digital touchscreens, cash boxes, fingerprint scanners, and other commonly touched surfaces in the passenger boarding and seating areas
- Avoid touching your face, mouth, nose, or eyes when handling frequently touched items.
- Follow the directions on the cleaning product's label.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds after touching frequently touched objects or surfaces.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How should I clean electronics?

For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards:

1. Consider putting a wipe able cover on electronics.
2. Follow manufacturer's instruction for cleaning and disinfecting.
3. If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How to Clean and Disinfect

Clean

- **Wear disposable gloves** to clean and disinfect.
- **Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant.**
- Cleaning with soap and water **reduces number of germs, dirt and impurities** on the surface. **Disinfecting kills germs** on surfaces.
- **Practice routine cleaning** of frequently touched surfaces.
 - More frequent cleaning and disinfection may be required based on level of use.
 - Surfaces and objects in rural vans such as handrails and seats should be cleaned and disinfected before each use.

High touch surfaces include:

- Tablets, handrails, steering wheels, seat tops, handles, lift controls, phones, keyboards, seatbelts, seatbelt latches, etc.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How to Clean and Disinfect

Disinfect

- Disinfect with a household disinfectant on List N: Disinfectants for use against SARS-CoV-2 the virus that causes COVID 19 found at [epa.gov/listn](https://www.epa.gov/listn).

Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.

Many products recommend:

- Keeping surface wet for a period of time (see product label).
- Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

Disinfect

Sources: [cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus) updated 10/21/2020

Always read and follow the directions on the label to ensure safe and effective use.

- Wear skin protection and consider eye protection for potential splash hazards
- Ensure adequate ventilation
- Use no more than the amount recommended on the label
- Use water at room temperature for dilution (unless stated otherwise on the label)
- Avoid mixing chemical products
- Label diluted cleaning solutions
- Store and use chemicals out of the reach of children and pets

You should never eat, drink, breathe or inject these products into your body or apply directly to your skin as they can cause serious harm. Do not wipe or bathe pets with these products or any other products that are not approved for animal use.

Special considerations should be made for people with asthma and they should not be present when cleaning and disinfecting is happening as this can trigger asthma exacerbations.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

Disinfect

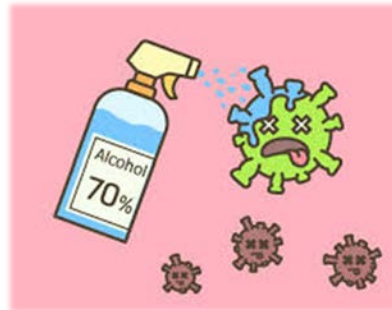
- If products on List N are not available, **diluted household bleach solutions** can be used if appropriate for the surface. Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted.
 - Use bleach containing 5.25%–8.25% sodium hypochlorite. Do not use a bleach product if the percentage is not in this range or is not specified.
 - Follow the manufacturer's application instructions for the surface, ensuring a contact time of at least 1 minute.
 - Ensure proper ventilation during and after application.
 - Check to ensure the product is not past its expiration date.
 - Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. This can cause fumes that may be very dangerous to breathe in.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

Disinfect

- **Prepare a bleach solution** by mixing:
 - 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per gallon of room temperature water OR
 - 4 teaspoons of 5.25%–8.25% bleach per quart of room temperature water
- Bleach solutions will be effective for disinfection up to 24 hours.
- **Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used.**



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

6 Steps for Safe & Effective Disinfectant Use



Step 1: Check that your product is EPA-approved

Find the EPA registration number on the product. Then, check to see if it is on EPA's list of approved disinfectants at: [epa.gov/listn](https://www.epa.gov/listn)



Step 2: Read the directions

Follow the product's directions. Check "use sites" and "surface types" to see where you can use the product. Read the "precautionary statements."

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

6 Steps for Safe & Effective Disinfectant Use



Step 3: Pre-clean the surface

Make sure to wash the surface with soap and water if the directions mention pre-cleaning or if the surface is visibly dirty.



Step 4: Follow the contact time

You can find the contact time in the directions. The surface should remain wet the whole time to ensure the product is effective.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

6 Steps for Safe & Effective Disinfectant Use



Step 5: Wear gloves and wash your hands

For disposable gloves, discard them after each cleaning. For reusable gloves, dedicate a pair to disinfecting COVID-19. Wash your hands after removing the gloves.



Step 6: Lock it up

Keep lids tightly closed and store out of reach of children

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

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

You don't need to wear gloves if you wash your hands regularly (unless they already are required for your job).

- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol if soap and water aren't available.
- Wash your hands at these key times:
 - Before, during, and after preparing food.
 - Before eating food.
 - After using the toilet.
 - After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
 - After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face coverings or masks.
 - Before and after work and work breaks.
 - Before and after contact with a passenger.
 - After handling cash and/or fare cards.
 - Before and after fueling.



Do not touch your face, mouth, nose, or eyes.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Cover your coughs and sneezes.



- Use tissues to cover your mouth and nose when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in a lined driver-only trash receptacle.
 - Place lined trash receptacles at the rear of vehicle for passengers.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use hand sanitizer with at least 70% alcohol when soap and water are not available.

COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

Avoid using the recirculated air option for the vehicle's ventilation during and immediately after transporting a passenger.

- Make sure the vehicle is well ventilated. Use the vehicle's vents to bring in fresh outside air, and lower the rear vehicle windows if outdoor conditions allow and it does not pose a health or safety risk to passengers.
- After transporting passengers, allow for sufficient air exchanges to remove any potentially infectious particles.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

When no alternative transportation is available, and it is necessary to transport a passenger *who has* a confirmed case of COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19, or *who has* had close contact in the past two weeks with someone confirmed to have COVID-19:

- Contact your employer to discuss your concerns if you feel unsafe transporting the passenger or if you are at increased risk of severe illness.
- Follow the CDC recommendations for [transporting known or suspected persons with COVID-19 using non-emergency vehicle services](#).
- If available, turn on the rear exhaust ventilation in addition to supplying outside air through the front vents.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others

When no alternative transportation is available, and it is necessary to transport a passenger *who has* a confirmed case of COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19, or *who has* had close contact in the past two weeks with someone confirmed to have COVID-19:

- Ensure the passenger wears a cloth mask, if appropriate. Wearing cloth masks may be difficult for individuals with physical, sensory, cognitive, or behavioral impairments, and is not recommended for children under age 2 years or for anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the cloth mask without assistance.
- After transporting the passenger, clean and disinfect the vehicle and wash your hands.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others – **Wheelchair Securement**

Wheelchair securement cannot be done effectively without a driver coming into direct contact with the passenger. For drivers securing passengers in wheelchairs, agencies must provide top-level personal protective equipment including, but not limited to, gloves, masks/shields as well as absolutely requiring passengers in wheelchairs to wear masks. At this time, many states are recommending public transportation and NEMT operators refer COVID-19 positive patients to local EMS providers for transportation. However, if your agency chooses to transport COVID-19 positive passengers in wheelchairs, follow CDC policies on equipment and cleaning for nurses and doctors working directly with positive patients.



COVID-19 Safety Protocols for Rural Transit Operators

How You Can Protect Yourself and Others – **Wheelchair Securement**

1. Ask passenger to turn their head towards the window as the driver secures their wheelchair (avoiding any sudden sneezes)
2. Ask passenger to not speak as the driver secures wheelchairs (avoiding any talking spray of the passenger)
3. Drivers should not speak to the passenger as they secure the passenger (avoiding their talking spray onto the passenger)
4. Follow the recommended steps for disinfecting the securement belts (lap and shoulder)
5. Follow CDC recommendations for recognizing symptoms for potentially affected passengers
6. If available, and the passenger does not already have one, offer passenger a mask to reduce the potential for contamination
7. Display recommendations on vehicle and educate passengers through other available means (website, social media feeds, etc.)
8. Establish process for promoting social distancing



Sources: ctaa.org/cvid-19-resources

Coping with stress during the COVID-19 outbreak

COVID-19 can be stressful, the effects can be both physical and emotional.

Things you can do to reduce stress:

- Take breaks from listening to, watching or reading about COVID-19 frequently, including social media.
- Focus on the facts of COVID-19 and understand the risk to yourself and those you care about.
- Separate facts from rumours. Gather information from reliable sources.
- If stress continues to hamper your daily activities, talk to a doctor, or someone you can trust.



**Keep yourself in the best possible health.
Sleep well, eat healthy
and be physically active.**

Are you ready for COVID-19?

Prepare yourself and your family:

- Monitor the situation. Know your local health helpline numbers and be aware of the local procedures.
- Ensure you have access to essentials such as food, water, household supplies and medicines.
- Speak to your doctor about any chronic medical conditions you may have, and get them under optimal control.
- Keep in best possible health. Get the recommended amount of sleep each day, eat a healthy diet, and keep up regular physical activity.
- Consider how you will manage if authorities impose restrictions for a couple of weeks.
- Plan to be able to look after a sick household member.
- Get the flu shot – this will reduce the risk of seasonal flu and possible confusion with COVID-19 symptoms.



What to do if you get sick



- **Stay home.** 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.
- **Wear a mask** in case you need to visit a doctor. Use private transport as much as possible.

What to do if you get sick



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.
- **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.

What to do if you get sick



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 get 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 get sick



Call ahead before visiting your doctor

- **Call ahead.** 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 get 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.



What to do if you get 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 70% alcohol.



What to do if you get sick



Wash 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 70% 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.

What to do if you get 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 or washing machine.



What to do if you get 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 get sick



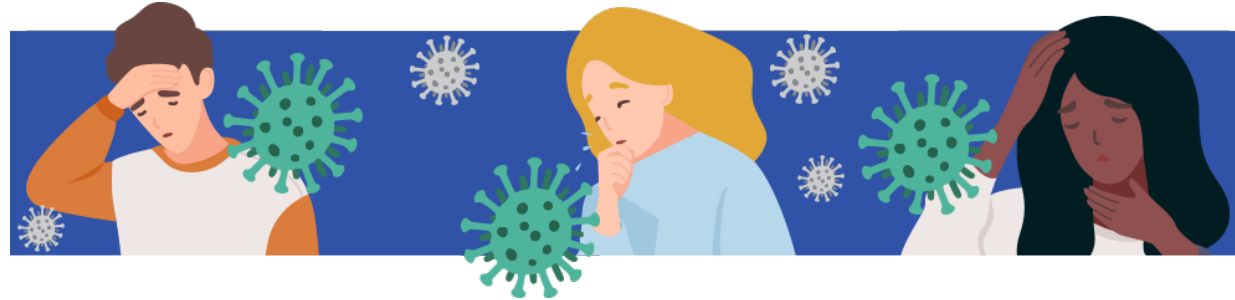
Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday

- **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.

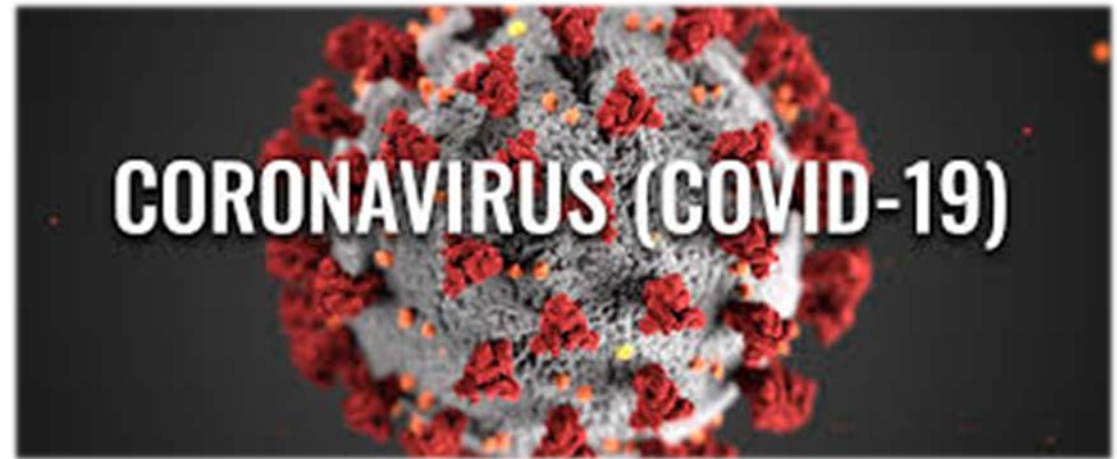
What to do if you get sick

Is it COVID-19 or Flu?

Some of the symptoms of flu and COVID-19 are similar, making it hard to tell the difference between them based on symptoms alone. Diagnostic testing can help determine if you are sick with the flu or COVID-19.

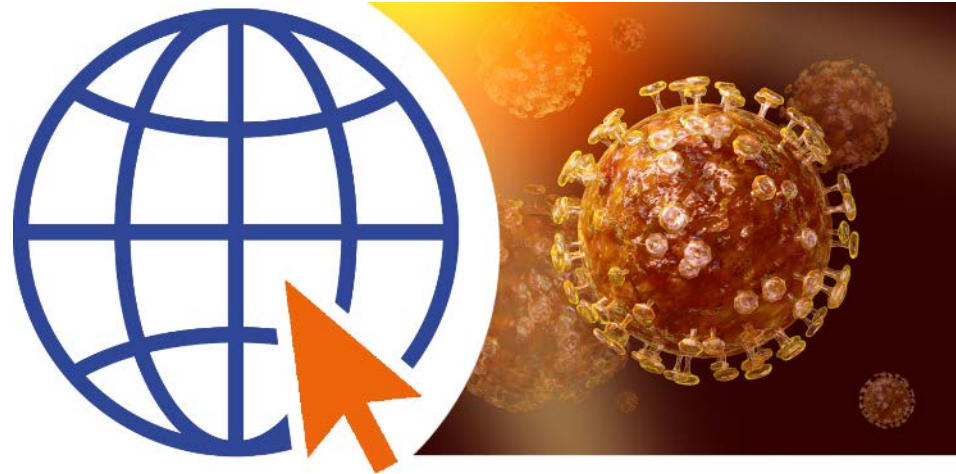


Any questions?



Disclaimer: This presentation has been developed for educational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Should you have questions or concerns about any topic described here, please consult your medical professional.

More information on COVID-19



Keep up to date with news and information from
CDC INFO: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) | TTY: 1-888-232-6348
| website: www.cdc.gov/info

Terms to know:

aerosols: infectious viral particles that can float or drift around in the air. Aerosols are emitted by a person infected with coronavirus — even one with no symptoms — when they talk, breathe, cough, or sneeze. Another person can breathe in these aerosols and become infected with the virus. Aerosolized coronavirus can remain in the air for up to three hours. A mask can help prevent that spread.

community spread (community transmission): is said to have occurred when people have been infected without any knowledge of contact with someone who has the same infection

contact tracing: a process that begins with identifying everyone a person diagnosed with a given illness (in this case COVID-19) has been in contact with since they became contagious. The contacts are notified that they are at risk, and may include those who share the person's home, as well as people who were in the same place around the same time as the person with COVID-19 — a school, office, restaurant, or doctor's office, for example. Contacts may be quarantined or asked to isolate themselves if they start to experience symptoms, and are more likely to be tested for coronavirus if they begin to experience symptoms.

Terms to know:

containment: refers to limiting the spread of an illness. Because no vaccines exist to prevent COVID-19 and no specific therapies exist to treat it, containment is done using public health interventions. These may include identifying and isolating those who are ill, and tracking down anyone they have had contact with and possibly placing them under quarantine.

epidemic: a disease outbreak in a community or region

flattening the curve: refers to the epidemic curve, a statistical chart used to visualize the number of new cases over a given period of time during a disease outbreak. Flattening the curve is shorthand for implementing mitigation strategies to slow things down, so that fewer new cases develop over a longer period of time. This increases the chances that hospitals and other healthcare facilities will be equipped to handle any influx of patients.

incubation period: the period of time between exposure to an infection and when symptoms begin

Terms to know:

isolation: the separation of people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick

mitigation: refers to steps taken to limit the impact of an illness. Because no vaccines exist to prevent COVID-19 and no specific therapies exist to treat it, mitigation strategies may include frequent and thorough handwashing, not touching your face, staying away from people who are sick, social distancing, avoiding large gatherings, and regularly cleaning frequently touched surfaces and objects at home, in schools, at work, and in other settings.

pandemic: a disease outbreak affecting large populations or a whole region, country, or continent

physical distancing: also called social distancing, refers to actions taken to stop or slow down the spread of a contagious disease. For an individual, it refers to maintaining enough physical distance (a minimum of six feet) between yourself and another person to reduce the risk of breathing in droplets or aerosols that are produced when an infected person breathes, talks, coughs, or sneezes.

Terms to know:

presumptive positive test result: a positive test for the virus that causes COVID-19, performed by a local or state health laboratory, is considered "presumptive" until the result is confirmed by the CDC. While awaiting confirmation, people with a presumptive positive test result will be considered to be infected.

quarantine: separates and restricts the movement of people who have a contagious disease, have symptoms that are consistent with the disease, or were exposed to a contagious disease, to see if they become sick

SARS-CoV-2: short for severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2, SARS-CoV-2 is the official name for the virus responsible for COVID-19.

Terms to know:

social distancing: also called physical distancing, refers to actions taken to stop or slow down the spread of a contagious disease. For an individual, it refers to maintaining enough physical distance (a minimum of six feet) between yourself and another person to reduce the risk of breathing in droplets or aerosols that are produced when an infected person breathes, talks, coughs, or sneezes. It is possible to safely maintain social connections while social distancing, through phone calls, video chats, and social media platforms.

virus: a virus is the smallest of infectious microbes, smaller than bacteria or fungi. A virus consists of a small piece of genetic material (DNA or RNA) surrounded by a protein shell. Viruses cannot survive without a living cell in which to reproduce. Once a virus enters a living cell (the host cell) and takes over a cell's inner workings, the cell cannot carry out its normal life-sustaining tasks. The host cell becomes a virus manufacturing plant, making viral parts that then reassemble into whole viruses and go on to infect other cells. Eventually, the host cell dies.

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