

FAQ with a Physician

This page is intended for informational purposes only. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. For more information, call your doctor.

1. Who are the people most at risk of COVID-19?

We are all 'at risk' of getting this infection. However, serious respiratory complications seem to develop mostly in the elderly and those with health conditions like asthma, diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

2. How is this different from the flu or any other infection?

Like the common flu, this is transmitted through droplets and contact; when a person sneezes, coughs or if a person touches an infected surface and then touches his or her eyes, nose, or mouth. Unlike the flu, we don't have a vaccine ready for this. COVID-19 also seems much more infectious than the common flu. Moreover, from the data we currently have, the risk of death from COVID-19 appears higher than for the common flu.

3. Do I need to stock up on hand sanitizer?

From what we are learning, our efforts to stay home, clean surfaces, wash our hands, refrain from touching our mucous membranes (mouth, nose, eyes) are effective means to decrease transmission. Sanitizer can help but it is only part of the solution.

4. Do I need to wear a mask if I go outside?

Only use a mask if you have COVID-19 or you are caring for someone with COVID-19. It is not an effective strategy to keep you from getting the infection and can give you a false sense of security. This applies to gloves as well. This is why we are asked to socially isolate rather than go outside with masks and gloves. Masks need to be used when in close contact with those with COVID-19 – such as in hospital. Please see number 13.

5. What if I think I have the COVID-19 infection?

Stay home. Most cases can be managed by rest, fluids, Tylenol. If you are unsure what to do, search for COVID SELF ASSESSMENT TOOL with your province name. The website can easily help you decide if you should stay home, contact a doctor or go to Emergency Department. In most provinces, a COVID assessment center requires screening and a referral from a physician.

6. Are there any natural remedies for COVID-19?

Many therapies are currently being tested and tried. Most of the testing revolves around medications for the sickest patients in the ICU. For mild cases, rest, Tylenol and warm fluids are the most effective. Antibiotics do not work against COVID-19. Any other remedies remain unproven, both in terms of benefit and of risk.

7. I just returned to Canada – what should I do to keep myself safe?

Go straight home and remain there for 14 days. Arrange for a friend or relative to drop off groceries on your doorstep so you can take care of your immediate needs. If you have symptoms of infection, check your provincial Public Health website for direction.

8. What are some essential supplies I need at home right now?

In Canada, we are privileged to have the essentials, running water, access to food and pharmacy. Having non-perishable food (rice, lentils, beans) is excellent. Having a thermometer and a supply of children's and adult Tylenol would be helpful. Moreover, a contingency plan helps as well. Who can you call to pick up groceries/essentials if you are unwell? Who are people you can call and check on? Who can help with your children if you are unwell?

9. Are children at high risk for infection from COVID-19?

Thankfully, we see that there are less cases in young children – however, there are still some severe cases. Children also seem to be important means of transmitting the infection. This is one of the reasons why parks and common playgrounds are closed.

10. I am practicing social isolation but there's still more and more cases in Canada- is it working?

Thank you for taking this so seriously. The impacts of social isolation will not be immediately visible. A quick search on Google however, can show you how one infected person can put many others at risk. Social isolation is an excellent Public Health strategy that will only work with your support.

11. I'm a healthcare worker – how can I keep my family safe?

Thank you for your brave efforts by showing up every day. Keeping yourself and your family safe is a necessity. Work with your Infection control colleagues. We are learning daily about how to use personal protective equipment responsibly – stay up to date on this. Please see the infographic below about a method some health-care workers are using to keep their families safe as well.

12. Where can I look for reliable information about COVID19?

The Public Health website in your province is the first place to look for health information. Some other sources are listed below. More provinces are allowing their family physicians to speak to patients via telephone – use this service.

13. How I can help?

Firstly, stay home. This is the most thankless but effective thing you can do. Other options include donating masks and sanitizers to hospitals for their use. This helps them to keep our healthcare workers safe. If you have industry contacts that can create masks or sanitizer – contact them. Many ICUs are also asking for 2 way baby monitors as a safe way to communicate. Moreover, blood donations are still just as necessary.



PROTOCOLS WHEN ENTERING YOUR HOME



FIGHTING COVID-19

1



When you come home try not to touch anything.

2



Remove your shoes.

3



Disinfect your pet's paws if you took them for walk.

4



Use bleach and a hot washing machine cycle (over 60 degrees).

Remove your clothes and place them in a bag to be washed.

5



Leave your bag, purse, wallet, keys, etc. in box at the entry of your home.

6



Hands, wrists, arms, neck, nails, etc.

Have a shower. If you can't, wash all exposed areas

7



Wash your mobile phone and glasses with hot soapy water or alcohol (disinfectant)

Prepare 20 ml of bleach per 1 litre of water solution



8

Clean with bleach all the surfaces of whatever you brought from outside before storing it.

Don't forget use gloves

9



Carefully remove and dispose of your gloves then wash your hands

10



Remember it is not possible to carry out complete disinfection, the goal is to minimise the risk.