



Older Adults and COVID-19: **Staying healthy during this stressful time**

Older adults are more likely to react severely to COVID-19, due partly to weaker immune systems and having chronic conditions. ***Stay informed to stay well!***

Maintain emotional well-being

- Continue to talk to family and friends who support you emotionally through telephone or Internet if you cannot see them in person
- Take a break from media, sleep well, go for a walk, and eat well

Make a plan and discuss with family and friends

- Create plans with family and friends for when you or someone you know becomes sick
- Designate an emergency contact and discuss plans with that person

Prepare in case you need to stay home

- Make sure you have access to several weeks of medications and supplies for yourself and people you live with
- Have essential materials like food, toiletries, and pet food to reduce the number of trips you have to make to the stores
- Find out what you can buy online and how; ask family and friends for help if needed

Symptoms to look out for:

- If you develop these symptoms, call your doctor BEFORE going in to take a test
 - Fever, cough, or trouble breathing
- If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 receive medical attention immediately. These include (not a conclusive list):
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
 - New confusion or inability to arouse
 - Bluish lips or face





Some precautions you can take to protect yourself:

- Disinfect frequently used areas and objects with common household disinfectants
- Wash your hands for at least twenty seconds with soap and water or use hand sanitizer that is at least 60% alcohol
- Do not touch your eyes, nose and mouth
- Stay home if you start to show symptoms
- Practice physical distancing – avoid traveling into your community unless necessary
- Avoid crowds, highly populated areas and people who are sick

Only use a face mask if you are:

- Showing symptoms - this will help prevent the spread to people around you
- If you are a caretaker or healthcare worker for someone who is showing symptoms

Resources:

- Iowa's public hotline for questions: **Dial 211** or visit 211iowa.org
- University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics: for general COVID-19 information and questions, call **319-384-8829** (for those with symptoms: **319-384-9010**)
- Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) COVID-19 webpage: <https://idph.iowa.gov/emerging-health-issues/novel-coronavirus>
- Iowa Department on Aging: <https://www.iowaaging.gov/>
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

Sources:

Administration for Community Living website: <https://acl.gov/COVID-19>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/high-risk/high-risk-complications.html>

National Council on Aging: <https://www.ncoa.org/blog/coronavirus-what-older-adults-need-to-know/>

