

# Better Health Advisors COVID-19 Toolkit

## COVID-19 Public Health Definitions

**Antibodies:** proteins that help the body fight infection

**Antibody Testing:** Antibody blood tests, also called antibody tests, check your blood by looking for antibodies, which show if you had a previous infection with the virus.

**Contact Tracing:** Contact tracing is the identification and follow-up of persons who may have come into contact with a person infected with the virus.

**Herd Immunity:** When most of a population is immune to an infectious disease, this provides indirect protection—or herd immunity (also called herd protection)—to those who are not immune to the disease. Depending how contagious an infection is, usually 70% to 90% of a population needs immunity to achieve herd immunity.

**Immunity:** Protection from an infectious disease. If you are immune to a disease, you can be exposed to it without becoming infected.

**Vaccine:** A product that stimulates a person's immune system to produce immunity to a specific disease, protecting the person from that disease. Vaccines are usually administered through needle injections, but can also be administered by mouth or sprayed into the nose.

**Viral Testing:** Viral tests check samples from your respiratory system (such as swabs of the inside of the nose) to tell you if you currently have an infection with SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

Sources:

CDC, WHO, Johns Hopkins

# PERSONAL RISK ASSESSMENT & CHECKLIST FOR COVID-19

## Personal Risk Assessment

COVID-19 is a new disease and there is limited information regarding its risk factors for complications or increased severity. Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- [People 65 years and older](#)
- Note: If high-risk, be extra careful about contact with others

Additionally, those at risk are people of all ages with [underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled](#), including:

- Chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Serious heart conditions
- Immunocompromised
  - Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, smoking, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications
- Severe obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 40 or higher)
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney disease undergoing dialysis
- Liver disease

# Pandemic Checklist

## 1. What should I have in my home?

### Devices to Monitor the Body

A reliable thermometer (not a meat one! to check temperatures

Thermometers can be purchased [here](#)

For adults: use an oral digital thermometer or ear thermometer

For young kids: use a temporal or ear monitor

A finger pulse oximeter to check the oxygen in your blood. COVID19 is known to have “silent hypoxia”, meaning low oxygen levels

Oximeters can be purchased [here](#)

If oxygen saturation goes below 95% call your Doctor

If less than 92% go to the nearest ER

### Prescription & Over the Counter Medications:

Daily Medications

Secure refills for prescribed medications

Insurance may allow early refills if you are currently unable to get to pharmacy due to issues related to COVID19. Mail-order prescriptions may also be an option

If you have asthma, make sure to stock up on asthma medications, such as inhalers

## Tylenol and Ibuprofen

Early reports suggested that Ibuprofen can be harmful when you have COVID19. This was not proven, although it is recommended that you try to use Tylenol initially

If Tylenol doesn't help symptoms of fever and body aches, then you can take ibuprofen

Taking the correct and maximum dosage is key. Check the label and if not other contraindications, they can be taken together

Guaifenesin (also known as Mucinex) can help liquefy secretions. Some anecdotal stories suggest it helps manage symptoms of increased mucus and secretions

**Note:** Do not obtain or take hydroxychloroquine because it could cause serious, even fatal, adverse effects. There is insufficient research on the drug's usefulness for COVID19

### **Considerations about Groceries & Household Items:**

Have sufficient household items and groceries in your home, so that you can limit trips out of your house for errands

Consider ordering household items and groceries online

If you are an older adult or an at-risk person, check with your local grocery store to see if there are select hours for you to shop with limited contact

## 2. What should I have in my phone and/or wallet?

List of daily medications

List of any allergies to medications

Insurance card (or photo of insurance card)

Emergency contact list

## 3. I am currently healthy. How do I protect myself?

Wash hands with soap and water for 20 seconds. If you don't have soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol

Wear a cloth face covering as recommended by the [CDC](#)

Practice social distancing by staying at least 6-feet away from others

Avoid people who are sick. If sick, stay home

Delay all travel, including plane trips, and especially cruises

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Cultivate a habit of not touching your face!

Clean and disinfect surfaces with products recommended by the [EPA](#), especially high-touch surfaces including:

phone, light switches, doorknobs, elevator buttons, handrails, kitchen appliances, countertops, remotes, cell phone, shared electronic equipment, keyboards, faucet, sinks, toilets

**4. I am starting to feel sick, but do not know if it is COVID19.**

**What symptoms should I look out for?**

The following are COVID19 symptoms that may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus:

Fever

Cough

Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

**Chills (new)**

**Repeated shaking with chills (new)**

**Muscle pain (new)**

**Headache (new)**

**Sore throat (new)**

**Loss of taste or smell (new)**

Rash on the feet for children

If you experience COVID19 symptoms, make a plan for taking care of yourself and interacting with others, and seek medical assistance if symptoms worsen **(see 3)**

Stay in touch with people, ask for help from friends, family, neighbors

Call your **DOCTOR** if you have symptoms, don't consult with Social Media. If you have a primary care physician, call them first before heading to urgent care if you are not in respiratory distress

## 5. I am starting to feel sicker. When should I seek medical attention?

Advice from the [CDC](#):

If you have any of these emergency warning signs\* for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately:

Trouble breathing

Persistent pain or pressure in the chest

New confusion or inability to arouse

Bluish lips or face

**\*Disclaimer: This list is not all-inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you. Call 911 if you have a medical emergency.** Notify the operator that you have, or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a cloth face covering before medical help arrives.

### **Important Message:**

People still die from a heart attack, stroke, infections. Don't hesitate to reach out to medical professionals, as you would have before the pandemic.



## Separating Fact from Fiction

Seeking updated information on COVID-19 from public health and medical experts can help you separate facts from fiction when making decisions.

Some trusted sources include:

- Academic Medical Centers (AMCs)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Cleveland Clinic
- Johns Hopkins
- Massachusetts General Hospital
- MD Anderson
- UpToDate
- World Health Organization (WHO)

Visit [BHA Coronavirus Resources](#) for additional insights and support.

## **Top Personal Health Tips for COVID-19**

1. Stay up to date with evidence-based, data-informed sources
2. Don't touch your face to avoid hand to mouth or nose transmission
3. Wash your hands with soap and water
4. As recommended by the CDC, wear a mask
5. Continue social-distancing to flatten the curve, and isolate if you become infected
6. Consider telemedicine to access care
7. Limit trips out for errands, and stop finding excuses to leave the house
8. Take routine medications, eat healthy, and stay hydrated
9. Try sticking to a schedule or routine, make your bed daily and get dressed for the day
10. Stay active with safe recreational activities, rather than organized sports. For understanding the risk of different activities, see the Aspen Institute

[Return to Play](#) guide