

# EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

## PROTECT YOURSELF AND RELATIVES FROM THE CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

### Q&A: HOW PHYSICAL DISTANCING PROTECTS YOU

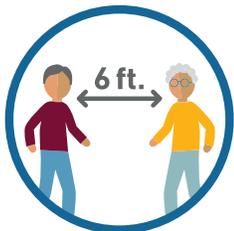
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During stressful times, there's no better comfort than being with family and friends. Unfortunately, it's the worst thing we can do as the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) rapidly spreads across our city and in our community.

Healthcare experts and government officials have urged us to practice social distancing to slow the spread of this very contagious virus. But when you hear social distancing, what that really means is **physical distancing**.

As director of linguistic services at Temple University Hospital, I'm going to explain what physical distancing means, how to keep you and your loved ones safe, and how to continue to stay connected to your friends and family during this time.

### WHAT IS SOCIAL DISTANCING?



A more accurate name is **physical distancing** — intentionally increasing the physical space between people to slow the spread of disease. That means staying at least 6 feet away from other people and purposely avoiding places where there are groups of people.

Physical distancing is why schools and non-essential businesses are closed; weddings, birthday parties, sporting events and concerts are postponed; employees are working from home; and worship services and workout classes are streaming online.

### CAN I STILL VISIT RELATIVES AND FRIENDS?



Follow a simple rule: if you don't live with them, don't visit them. This goes for even family members like cousins or grandparents living in other homes outside of your own.

Older adults or someone with an underlying health condition (like diabetes, asthma, and more serious heart problems and lung problems) are especially more at risk for the virus. As difficult as it may seem, only visit older relatives to deliver food, medications or supplies. But when delivering these items, it's best to leave them on the front step for the other person to come pick up once you leave.

Family gatherings should be put on hold as well. You must limit your contact to only the immediate family members living in your home. That means travel is off-limits, too, especially to New York City, where there have been more than 68,000 cases of the coronavirus and more than 2,700 people have already died.



You also risk getting and spreading the virus when hanging out with friends. Avoid gatherings even outside, such as on your front sidewalk, at a park, a corner store or a bodega. If you do need to go to the bodega, it's important to keep 6 feet apart from other people.

People of every age need to stay home, even if you're young and healthy. If you must go out, avoid groups of people and stay 6 feet away from others.

Practicing physical distancing doesn't mean you have to give up being in touch with your friends and family. With digital options like FaceTime, social media and even phone calls, you can still stay connected, just in a different way.

## HOW WILL I KNOW IF I'VE BEEN EXPOSED TO THE CORONAVIRUS?



Even though the virus is spreading easily, not everyone who's exposed gets sick. It's believed the virus spreads mainly from person to person. When someone infected sneezes, coughs or talks, they produce respiratory droplets that can travel and land in the mouths of someone nearby. That's why physical distancing is important.

Droplets can also land on a surface and be spread when someone touches that surface and then their nose, eyes or mouth. Symptoms of the virus include:

- Fever
- Dry cough
- Trouble breathing

If you have symptoms, call your family or primary care doctor and follow their instructions. Most importantly, **stay home**. Avoid contact with other people, including anyone in your home and immediate family members such as cousins, aunts, uncles and grandparents.

If possible, stay in a specific "sick room" and use a separate bathroom. If you need to share a bathroom, wipe down handles and surfaces with a disinfectant after touching them and allow the surfaces to air dry.

If you believe you've been exposed or traveled from another part of the country or world, you should self-quarantine for 14 days. That includes:



- Staying home
- Not having visitors
- Washing hands frequently
- Staying at least 6 feet away from other people in your household

## WHAT ELSE CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF AND OTHERS?

In addition to staying at home, there are things you can do to reduce the spread of the virus and your risk of exposure, including:



### Wash your hands often

**Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds.** It's especially important if:

- You've been in a public place, including the grocery store/bodega
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- Before unpacking groceries and after
- After handling any packages, including food delivery packaging
- After exchanging money or handling credit cards

Soap and water are best, but if they're not available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.**



### Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow if you have to sneeze or cough. Throw tissues in the trash and wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



### Clean and disinfect household items

You should clean and disinfect high-touch areas in your home daily. That includes surfaces such as tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that for disinfecting your household you should **use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol.** If appropriate for the surface, you can also use a diluted bleach solution of 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water.

## WHO CAN I TALK TO IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS?

**You can speak with a medical professional by calling the Philadelphia Department of Health COVID line at 215-685-6742 or the Temple COVID hotline at 215-707-6999.**

You can also talk to a city employee 24 hours a day by calling **800-722-2112.**

*Angel L. Pagán serves as the Director of Linguistic and Cultural Services at Temple University Health System. Angel has dedicated his career to increasing healthcare cultural sensitivity to Philadelphia's diverse community. He has a specific focus in ensuring language resources equality for all Temple patients and their families.*



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