COVID-19 UPDATE 03-19-20

ILLNESS AND SYMPTOMS

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and, in severe cases, difficulty breathing. Read more about the symptoms of COVID-19 here: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html

How sick are people with COVID-19?

Most people infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 will have no symptoms or mild symptoms. But some (especially those older than 60 years or with other medical conditions) may develop severe illness and even die.

Everywhere I go people are coughing. How do I know they don’t have this new virus?

There are many other infections that cause fever and cough. Everyone should try to prevent getting sick from any of these infections and COVID-19 by usual but effective methods described below. If you are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19, due to age >60 or because you have other chronic medical conditions, it is especially important that you take these steps as shown below.

Am I at high risk for serious illness or dying if I get this virus?

If you are at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19, it is extra important for you to take actions to reduce your risk of getting this infection. People who are at higher risk of getting very sick from this infection include:

• Older adults, such as those older than 60 years old
• People with other chronic medical conditions like: o Heart disease
• Diabetes or Lung disease

What should I do right now if I am high risk for getting COVID-19?

Prevent getting infected during the COVID-19 epidemic:

• Avoid close contact with people who are sick
• Keep your hands clean.
• Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place.
• If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. o to the extent possible, avoid touching high-touch surfaces in public places – elevator buttons, door
handles, handrails, handshaking with people, etc. Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something.

- Wash your hands after touching surfaces in public places.
- Avoid touching your face, especially your nose, eyes, and mouth.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently-touched surfaces in your environment (for example: tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilet handles, faucets, sinks and cell phones).
- Avoid crowds, especially in poorly-ventilated spaces.
- Avoid all non-essential travel including plane trips and cruise ships. Stay home as much as possible:
- Consider ways of getting household items and food brought to your house through family, social, or commercial networks
- Contact your healthcare provider to ask about obtaining extra necessary prescription medications in case you need to stay home for a prolonged period of time.
- If you cannot get extra medications, consider using mail-order for medications.
- Be sure you have over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies to treat fever and other symptoms. Most people will be able to recover from COVID-19 at home. Have a plan in case you get sick:
  - Consult with your healthcare provider for more information about monitoring your health for symptoms suggestive of COVID-19.
  - Stay in touch with others by phone or email. You may need to ask for help from friends, family, neighbors, community health workers, etc. if you become sick.
  - Determine who can provide you with care if your own caregiver gets sick.

Is there a treatment for COVID-19?

People sick with COVID-19 can receive supportive care to help relieve symptoms, such as taking pain or fever medications, drinking plenty of fluids, and resting. Most people sick with COVID-19 can stay at home. Some patients who are very sick may need to go to the hospital.

What if I think I might have COVID-19?

If you develop a fever and symptoms of respiratory illness, such as cough or shortness of breath, you should call ahead to your healthcare professional. You may also call in to the new 211 NH COVID-19 hotline, simply dial 211 where you can consult with a trained operator. Your healthcare professional will determine if you need to be tested for COVID-19.

When can I go back to work after a respiratory illness/suspect COVID-19?

Any person with COVID-19 compatible symptoms who is not tested and can be managed at home (i.e., does not require hospitalization) should be instructed to self-isolate until: At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery*
*Recovery is defined as a resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms.
QUICK LINKS TO STATE AND FEDERAL WEBSITES:

NH DPHS: https://www.nh.gov/covid19/

NH HSEM: https://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/hsem/index.html


QUICK REFERENCE HOTLINES:

People with general questions on COVID-19 to this phone number: 2-1-1

Callers will reach a phone menu, and then select the ‘COVID’ option to reach a live operator. Callers should expect to wait patiently for many minutes to reach an operator.

Report any suspect cases of COVID-19 (via exposure or travel) to the DPHS at these phone numbers:

During the day, call 603-271-4496 (office hours from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM) or 603-271-5300 (only after hours). Caller should expect to leave a message with an operator, or leave a voice mail, and wait patiently for a return call within a few hours.

Direct sick people (i.e. symptomatic with fever, cough or shortness of breath) to call their healthcare provider:

If they don’t have a provider, they can call an urgent care clinic and ask for an evaluation.