

Protective Measures to be Taken during COVID

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Editorial

People who are affected by humanitarian crises and those living in low capacity settings are differently impacted by the COVID-19 outbreak. Critical measures for COVID-19 prevention and control that has been a feature of the response in higher resource settings may be more difficult to implement and some of them potentially harmful to the survival of many community members.

The capacities for testing, isolating and treating those who develop the disease, tracing and quarantining contacts may be severely lacking locally owing to weaker health systems. Public health and social measures in these settings need to be balanced against other risks affecting their communities, access to basic services such as lack of income and food insecurity.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your nose, eyes and mouth with unwashed hands. Avoid close contact with people who are sick and practice social distancing by keeping at least 6 feet away from others if you must go out in public.

Wear a cloth face covering to cover your mouth and nose when around others and when you must go out in public. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, handles, desks, light switches, computers, phones, keyboards, toilets, sinks, faucets and countertops. If you have symptoms including sneezing, coughing and fever, avoid contact with pets. Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is important to take precautions.

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If possible, stay in a bedroom and use a bathroom separate from other people in the home. Use separate glasses, dishes, cups, and eating utensils and not share these with other household members. After use, run them through the dishwasher or wash with very hot soapy water. Use separate bedding and towels and not share these with other household members.

If the person who is sick can't wear a mask, caregivers should wear one while they're in the same room. Make sure shared spaces in the home have good air flow. You can open a window or turn on air conditioner. Do not allow visitors into your home. This includes adults and children.

Wash the sick person's bedding, clothing and towels with detergent on the hottest temperature possible. Every day, use a household cleaner or wipe to clean things that get touched a lot. Keep a sick child's toys separate from other toys, if possible.