At a Glance: COVID-19 Resources and Tips

# How coronavirus spreads

Human coronaviruses, including COVID-19, cause infections of the nose, throat and lungs, and are most commonly spread from an infected person through

* respiratory droplets from coughing or sneezing,
* close, prolonged contact
* touching a something that has the virus on it, then touching your mouth, nose or eyes before washing your hands

Health officials have stated that we must maintain a distance of more than 2 meters (6 feet) away from other people to help limit the spread of the virus.

# Prevention

## Handwashing

Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds making sure that you cover:

* Palms
* Back of hands
* Fingers
* Thumbs
* Webs
* Nails (fingers and thumb)
* Wrists

## Avoid touching your face

People on average touch their face 16 times per hour.

* Everyone needs to change their habits to avoid touching our faces (especially our eyes, nose and mouth).
* If you touch your face as a nervous habit, find something else to hold onto and/or carry around with you, like a fidget toy (even a rubber band), a tactile activity, interlace your fingers together, keep your hands in your pockets, or find some other way to distract restless hands. You can also wear sunglasses as a reminder not to rub your eyes

## Cleaning and Sanitizing

When we go outside or when people come into our homes, we may be bringing germs back into our homes. So, we must clean and then sanitize frequently touched objects with bleach wipes, or a spray of alcohol or peroxide to ensure we are preventing the spread as much as possible. When cleaning any area of your home, use overlapping strokes in a grid pattern to ensure full coverage.

High touch surfaces include:

* toys
* toilets
* light switches
* phones
* electronics
* door handles
* bedside tables
* television remotes

## Monitor your symptoms

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough, difficulty breathing.

If you start feeling unwell keep track of all of your symptoms and your interactions with other people.

* If you can read your own writing, use a thick pen or marker to make large writing that you will be able to read back to yourself. You can also record notes on a computer, smartphone, Brailler or slate and stylus, or in a voice memo
* Contact your doctor or Telehealth if you are feeling unwell.

Use a thermometer if possible, to monitor yourself for a fever. A number of stores sell talking thermometers you may be able to find them at Shop CNIB, Canadian Tire, Walmart, or on Amazon. At this time many stores are sold out of thermometers if you can’t find one you can:

* Ask a family member if you look well, or if your face is red
* Identify if you are feeling sweaty or clammy

# Shopping and Cooking

With stores running low on many different items and the possibility of needing to isolate either due to your own health concerns or signs of illness here are a few items to consider purchasing.

## Bath and hygiene

* 30-day supply of medication, including over-the-counter pain relievers, cough and cold medicine and electrolytes
* Toilet paper
* Feminine hygiene products
* [Hand soap](https://www.cnet.com/news/the-best-germ-killing-hand-soaps-from-cheap-to-luxury/)
* Laundry detergent (ideally [the concentrated kind](https://www.amazon.com/Method-Laundry-Detergent-Clear-Ounce/dp/B002YD7TTQ?tag=cnet-buy-button-20), which lasts longer)
* Diapers, formula, baby wipes and other infant needs
* Body wash, shampoo, conditioner and skincare needs
* Hand soap and cleaning supplies

## Food and kitchen

[Pantry](https://www.chowhound.com/food-news/257544/how-to-stock-a-kitchen-pantry/):

* Dried beans, rice and other grains, like oatmeal
* Canned fish, soup and stews
* Essentials like oil, salt and pepper
* Smoothie blends and protein powder
* Coffee and tea
* Snacks that have a longer shelf life, like dried fruit and nuts
* Cured meats

Freezer:

* Meat and poultry (ideally vacuum-sealed), like chicken, beef and pork
* Avoid fish, which can spoil if not properly frozen
* Vegetables and fruit

Other:

* Pet food (and treats!)
* All-purpose cleaning spray or wipes
* Dish soap and sponges

## Shopping in person

* Try going first thing in the morning when many stores have reserved the hour for seniors and those with disabilities
* Many stores are admitting a limited number people
* Many stores have tape on the floor to indicate the proper distance to stand
* You may want to visit smaller businesses they are usually less busy and may have more items available
* Don’t touch your face when out
* Clean your phone, wallet and anything else you may have touched when you get home
* Wash your hands
* Wash your fruits and vegetables thoroughly, and wipe down all groceries with a disinfecting wipe

## Shopping Online

Shopping online is a good option many stores like Loblaws, Metro and Walmart have their own online shopping platforms some of the most popular ones in Toronto are: grocery gateway, Instacart, Inabuggy and Farm City Fresh

There are significant wait times of up to two weeks on most online orders so ensure to plan ahead.

## Foodbanks

Many food banks are still running, and many meal programs are now offering pick up options. Call 211 if you need to ask if your local program is still running

# Physical and Mental Wellbeing

## Fitness

Exercise decreases stress and anxiety and helps you sleep better so it is still very important to keep active

* Go for a walk in an uncrowded area
* Home calisthenics: sit-ups, push-ups, tricep dips , wall sits
* Dance to your favourite songs
* Try a variety of described workouts from Eyes Free Fitness

<https://www.blindalive.com/>

## Reading

The public library is closed and has stopped home service, Cela Library is also not sending out braille or daisy discs

You can however access books on your computer or your smart device through the public library apps like OverDrive or Libby or with Dolphin Easy Reader if you have a CELA account.

The apps are free, and we can still get you signed up, your local ILS instructor can assist in providing instruction on their use over the phone.

## Learn Something New

Online courses offered through platforms such as Hadley, Coursera, or OpenCulture. Phone or Video lessons with your local vision loss rehab worker or through your CNIB Hub.

## Write

Do you love poetry, have you been meaning to write a family history or a personal memoir? Now is a good time to get started!

There are dictation apps for computers or smart phones, you can type them on your computer, if you prefer to write by hand there are plenty of writing aids available at Shop CNIB.

## Other activities:

* Gardening can be done inside or out
* Sculpting with clay, paper clay or polymer clay
* Knit, weave, or crochet

If you are looking for other ways to spend some of your time, your ILS can provide you with many tips for leisure activities!

## Mental Health Resources

Many of us may be experiencing various side effects of isolation, which might include:

* restlessness
* decreased motivation
* [irritability](https://www.healthline.com/health/irritability)
* hopelessness
* [difficulty concentrating](https://www.healthline.com/health/unable-to-concentrate)
* [irregular sleep patterns](https://www.healthline.com/health/irregular-sleep-wake-syndrome), including sleepiness or sleeplessness
* difficulty waking up
* [lethargy](https://www.healthline.com/health/lethargy)
* distrust of people around you
* lack of patience
* persistent [sadness or depression](https://www.healthline.com/health/depression/depression-vs-sadness)

It is important to remember that these are feelings that are normal, and there are many resources, and supports that we can turn to.

A few things that may help to alleviate these feelings are

1. Stick to a routine, go to sleep, and wake up at regular times.
2. Shower, get dressed, brush your teeth, put on clothes that you feel good in
3. Get outside if you can
4. Exercise eat healthy and stay hydrated.
5. Reach out to others, phone calls, texting, FaceTime or Skype, or via social media platforms

## Over the Phone Crisis Support:

For people under 20 years old

Kids Help Phone: (24/7)

1-800-668-6868

For people 65+years old Crisis Outreach Service for Seniors

(9:00am‑5:00pm daily): 416-217-2077

Mental Health Peer Support:

LGBT Youth Line Peer support by and for people 29 and under

Call 1-800-268-9688

Text 647-694-4275

Chat

www.youthline.ca

Progress Place Warmline

Peer support hotline

Call 416-960-9276

Text 647-557-5882

Chat www.warmline.ca

Call 211 for information on more Community Services