

Sound Public Health Practices for Seniors

Prepared by Dennis W. Streets based on information from the CDC and the NC Department of Health and Human Services, March 2, 2020 - see also: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/specific-groups/index.html>

Here are a few common-sense practices to remember as we hear about the Coronavirus:



To help prevent and reduce the spread of illness to yourself and others:

- **Wash your hands often and do it well.**
 - Wet your hands with clean running water and then lather them with soap; don't miss the backs of your hands, between your fingers and under your nails.
 - Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. (This is about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice.) Then, rinse your hands well with clean, running water.
 - Dry your hands with a clean towel or let them air dry.
 - If it is not feasible to wash your hands with soap and water, you can use a hand sanitizer, but check the label to be sure it contains at least 60 percent alcohol.
 - Squirt the hand sanitizer gel onto your palms, rub your hands together, and then rub the gel all over your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This step should take about 20 seconds, as well.
- **Stay home if you are sick, and drink plenty of liquids and rest.**
- **Stay your distance (at least 6 feet) from people who appear to be sick—such as sneezing and coughing.**
- **If you have to cough or sneeze, don't do it the old-fashioned way, by covering your mouth with your hands. Do cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm instead, or at least cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.**
- **Do not reuse tissue after coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose. Dispose of used tissues in a wastebasket. Don't leave them wadded up by the bed or on other surfaces.**
- **Avoid shaking hands.**
- **Avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes before washing your hands.**
- **Keep surfaces in your home clean. Alcohol is a good disinfectant.**
- **Also don't forget to sanitize contact surfaces if you go out and return or have home deliveries. This includes door knobs, counter tops, and other surfaces.**

Be prepared:

- **Keep at least a 30-day supply of essential medicines.**
- **Have essential household items on hand, such as laundry and dish detergent, and toilet tissue.**
- **Have essential personal supplies on hand, such as toothpaste, soap, incontinence briefs, etc.**
- **Have a supply of basic food staples—but no need to stockpile food. Prepare—don't panic.**
- **Get your flu and pneumonia vaccinations if you haven't already.**