

Practice Social Distancing

When a virus or infection is spreading throughout the community, you must do your part to slow the spread. Even if you are young, or otherwise healthy, you are at risk and your activities can increase the risk for others in your community especially older people and those with chronic health conditions. That's why it's important to practice Social Distancing. Social distancing means increasing the physical space between people and staying about six feet away—about two arm lengths-- to avoid spreading this virus.

Here's how you can practice social distancing to reduce the spread of infection. Wear a mask when you are in public around people who don't live with you and when you can't stay six feet away from others. Listen to your local health officials for the latest information on social distancing guidelines for restaurants, religious services, and in-store shopping.

Social distancing also means no physical contact with loved ones—no hugging, touching and shaking hands with others. This will help to slow the spread of infection. Another way to practice social distancing is to work from home whenever possible unless you are considered an essential employee such as a healthcare worker or emergency response personnel.

If you return to work, remember to keep a mask, tissues, and hand sanitizer on hand. This helps stop the spread of infection through contact-- coughing and sneezing and touching common surfaces such as elevator buttons and doorknobs.

Remember to wash your hands with soap and water often for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in a public place, after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, and after handling your mask. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.

Sneezing and coughing can spread the virus. If you must sneeze or cough in public, keep your mask on, distance yourself from others and sneeze or cough into your elbow. Wash your hands right way or use hand sanitizer.

Practicing social distancing can make you feel disconnected from your loved ones and community, but there are ways you can stay emotionally connected during this stressful time. You can connect with friends and family through phone calls, texts, video chats and social media.

Social distancing can be tough but remember, you are doing it for the safety of your loved ones. Reach out to family and friends on regular basis to help you feel connected. For more information on how to stop the spread of viruses, visit www.cdc.gov.