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# A Self-Advocate's Guide to **COVID-19**

## Part 1: Basic Covid-19 Information By And For People With Disabilities

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The Coronavirus is a new disease spreading around the world. Part 1 focuses on “need to know” information about the Coronavirus. It is in plain language. Our goal is to keep people with disabilities healthy during this global crisis. Part 1 is available in 11 languages at: <https://selfadvocacyinfo.org/resource/plain-language-information-on-covid-19/>

# Basic Covid-19 Information

## By And For People With Disabilities

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### What is COVID-19?

- It is a new illness spreading around the world.
- It's nickname is coronavirus.



### How do you get it?



- Someone with COVID-19 gives you their germs.
- When they cough or sneeze, their germs get in the air, on you, and on things.



- Germs get into your body through your mouth, nose, and your eyes.

### What happens if you have it?



A fever of 100.4°F  
(38°C) or higher



Coughing



Hard time  
breathing

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**If these things happen to you, it does not mean you have coronavirus. Lots of people get a fever or cough.**

**You could just have a cold or the flu.**

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### **If I am sick, when should I call a doctor?**



- If you have a cough or fever, call your doctor.
- Do not go to your doctor's office unless your doctor tells you to.
- If you get services tell your case manager and support staff that you feel sick.

**Call your doctor, do not go to the office.**

### **How sick do you get?**



- Most people do not get very sick. It is like having a cold or the flu.
- Some people get very sick and need to go to the hospital. Older people and people with disabilities are more likely to get very sick.

## How can I stay healthy, or not get it?

### Wash your hands.



- Use lots of soap and water.
- Wash for at least 20 seconds.  
If it helps, count to 20.
- Wash after using the bathroom or being in public (like going to a store).
- If soap and water are not available, use hand sanitizer. Know that washing well with soap and water is still better.



### Cough or Sneeze into your elbow.



Coughing and sneezing into your elbow stops germs from going into the air and onto your hands.

### Try not to touch your face



- Do not rub your eyes.
- Do not touch your mouth.
- Do not touch your nose.

Remember, this is how germs get in your body.



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If you have to touch your face, do it with a tissue or in the shower.

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### Try to keep your hands busy:



- Tap your knee.
- Use a fidget spinner.
- Use hand sanitizer.
- Doodle.
- Squeezing a stress ball.
- Play a game on your device.

### If I am sick, what should I do?

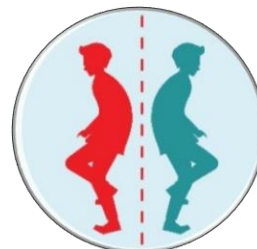
Call your doctor. Do NOT go to a hospital or Urgent Care.



Stay Home



Use tissues,  
then throw  
them away



Avoid  
contact with  
others



Keep  
objects and  
surfaces  
clean

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**Call your doctor again if you are getting worse. Call back if you are having trouble breathing. Do what your doctor says.**

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### **If my staff person is sick, what should I do?**

- Doctors say if you are sick stay home. Do not go to work. A sick staff person should stay home until they are well.
- Tell your team. Tell your case manager.



### **What do I do if someone I live with gets sick?**

Someone else living in your home could get coronavirus or think they have these germs in their body.



- Stay away from the sick person. And try to stay at least 6 feet (2 meters) away from places where the sick person has been.
- Keep washing your hands well.

**Call your case manager.** A plan will be made to keep you apart from the sick person. You should still call and send notes to them.

## How do I say hello to my friends?



- No handshaking.
- No hugging.
- No fist bumps.
- Smile, video chat, text, call, message

## You should stay home most of the time.

Many places have Stay-at-Home orders from their Governors.

Most of these orders says you can only leave your house to:



- walk, exercise
- get groceries or medicine
- work if you are needed
- go to a doctor's appointment
- get take-out food

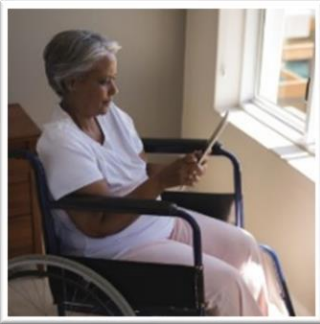
## If you MUST go out in public:



- Wash your hands before and after.
- Stay 6 feet (2 meters) apart from other people.
- Wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth when near people.

This change is only for a while. The Governor will tell us when the Stay-At-Home order is over.

## Why is it important to do all of this?



- You do not want your grandparents to get sick, do you?
- Some people with disabilities get sick really easily. You would feel awful if you got your friends or family sick.

## Is there a shot to get, so I do not get sick?

No. There is not a shot or vaccine to stop the coronavirus.

## Is there a medicine?



- There is no medicine for COVID-19.
- Take medicine used when you have a cold or flu.
- Drink lots of water. Get plenty of rest.

## What do I say to my friends if they get scared?

Talk to someone you trust. You can show them this booklet for ideas on what to do.



## I have a job. I am worried about missing work.



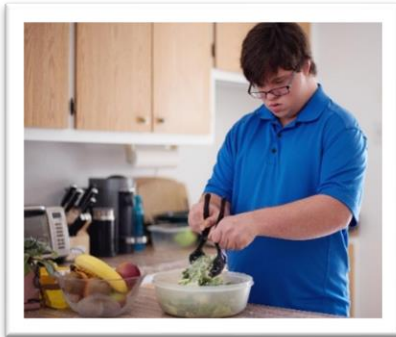
- When there is a Stay-at-Home order in your town many people will not be working. Some will be working from home.
- You need to keep in touch with your job.





If you are working, you need to keep you safe. Your boss or support staff will make sure you know what to do. They will get you a mask and gloves to use when in public.

## Make a plan for staying at home.



- Who can go food shopping for you?
- Who will call to check in on you?
- What to do if your support staff calls in sick?
- Make sure you know your doctor's phone number.

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**Talk to your self-advocacy group, friends, family, or support staff about your worries and concerns.**

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If you have been near a person with Coronavirus, tell someone. A person can have coronavirus in their body and not feel sick. It takes a few days to get sick. This virus spreads very easily. You do not want to give it to others.