

# The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is still learning how COVID-19 spreads, the severity of illness it causes, and to what extent it may spread in the United States.

According to the CDC, the best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposure to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC recommends everyday actions to help prevent the spread of all respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, and then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently-touched objects/surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow the CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
  - The CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of disease to others. They are also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol).
  - Always wash hands with soap and water if they are visibly dirty.

## Practical and Prudent Actions for the Square and Round Dance Community

- In our square dance world, wash your hands after dancing each tip – before going to the refreshment table. Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs.
  - Post hand-washing instructions at your dances.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with at least 60% alcohol). To be effective, the sanitizer must be used properly; see instructions.
  - Post instructions for proper use of hand sanitizer at your dances.
  - *Hand sanitizer is currently in short supply. Be aware that all internet recipes for homemade hand sanitizer using vodka result in ineffective products.*
- Do not sneeze or cough into your elbow – dancers may come in contact with another dancer's arm or elbow area. Cough or sneeze into a tissue, and then immediately throw the tissue away (meaning *don't put it in your pocket*) and wash your hands.
- It's still cold and flu season. If you have the sniffles or a cough or a fever – you shouldn't be at a dance anyway. We will miss you, but your health (and everyone else's) is more important.
- Use common sense. If your health history places you into a category at higher risk for developing serious illness, we understand if you stay home.
- If you have traveled to any “no travel areas” – whether in another county or in the US – you may want to wait a few weeks before coming to a dance or class, just to be on the safe side.
- Be courteous to the caller and cuer; do not use their microphones. We all may have to be (and should be) quiet and attentive during announcements.
- Before placing refreshments out, clean and disinfect the table and use disposable tablecloths.
- Use disposable *single-use* cups and utensils. Yes, we will need more cups. Drink, then throw away – to prevent a table full of used cups and the cleanup needed at the end of a dance. This trend has already started; Starbucks will no longer let you refill a reusable cup/mug.
- The CDC does not advise facemasks as a means of virus prevention for the general public. Facemasks are recommended for people with COVID-19 symptoms, health care workers, and caregivers. They must be selected, used, and handled correctly to be effective.



- Similarly, the CDC does not recommend the use of gloves for the general public as a means of prevention. Gloves themselves become a source of contamination, must be changed frequently, and often give a false sense of security to the casual user. Health care workers and caregivers need gloves, and the diminishing supply is impacting their ability to care for patients.
- Current advice is to avoid crowds, limit close contact with others, and limit travel. Local, state, or federal limits on travel or large assemblies may be enacted. In some affected areas, schools and offices are closed or are planning for telecommuting and remote learning.
- A square dance brings together a crowd, and we touch each other. Respect individual decisions about personal contact. People may wish to refrain from kissing, hugging (think Yellow Rocks), or handshaking – makes a lot of square dance calls more challenging ...



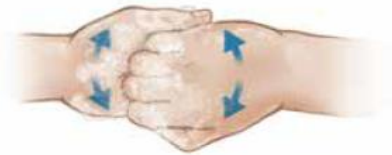
## Hand-washing for virus protection



The process of hand-washing should take at least 20 seconds. To start, wet your hands and apply soap to cover the hand surfaces. Rub your hands together palm to palm.



Rub one palm over the back of the other hand, then switch hands and repeat. Next, rub your fingers together.



Rub the tops of your fingers in the palm of the other hand. Switch hands and repeat.



Grab your thumb in the palm of the other hand; rub all around the thumb. Switch hands and repeat.



Twist the tips of your fingers back and forth in the palm of your hand. This helps clean under your fingernails. Switch and repeat.



Rub your hands while you rinse them under running water. Dry your hands well, preferably with a paper towel. Use the towel to turn off the faucet and open the door as needed.

## Use Hand Sanitizer When You Can't Use Soap and Water

If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol (check the label). **Nevertheless, washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations.** Although sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in many situations:



- Sanitizers do **not** get rid of all types of germs.
- Sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.
- Sanitizers may not remove harmful chemicals like pesticides/heavy metals.

### How to Use Hand Sanitizer

- Apply the gel product to the palm of one hand (read label for correct amount) and rub your hands together.
- Rub the gel over *all* the surfaces of your hands and fingers until your hands are dry. This should take around 20 seconds. (If your hands dry in less time, you did not use enough product.)

*The following information is taken from the CDC website – [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html) – and other reliable sources (including Mayo Clinic). Additional links: [www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml](http://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/topics/ncov.shtml), <https://health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/coronavirus>.*

*There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).*

## **How COVID-19 Spreads**

- Person to person:
  - The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - The virus spreads through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.
  - Droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
- Can someone spread the virus without being sick?
  - People are thought to be most contagious when they are most symptomatic (the sickest).
  - Some spread might be possible before people show symptoms; there have been reports of occurrences with this new coronavirus, but it is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.
- Can I get the virus from touching contaminated objects?
  - It may be possible to get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching one's own mouth, nose, or possibly eyes. But this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

## **Symptoms, Severity of Illness, and What to Do if You Are Ill**

- Reports have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed COVID-19 cases. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure:
  - Fever
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
- At present, most people seem to experience a relatively mild illness. They can isolate at home and take care of themselves during the illness.
  - More serious illness seems to occur in older individuals, those with suppressed immune systems, and those with other significant medical conditions such as lung disease, heart disease, cancer, and diabetes.
  - Early reports suggest that serious illness occurs in roughly 16% of cases.
- **CALL YOUR DOCTOR** if you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 or have developed a fever with symptoms of respiratory illness such as cough or difficulty breathing – especially if you have been in close contact with someone known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently traveled to an area with ongoing spread. Call ahead before visiting your doctor, an urgent care center, or the emergency room so the facility can make arrangements to care for you without placing others at risk of possible exposure.
  - Only laboratory testing can confirm whether or not your illness is COVID-19.
  - Keep in mind that ordinary flu or pneumonia can also be serious for the very young, the elderly, and those with significant medical conditions as listed above, and they may need medical care.

**For Frequently Asked Questions and Answers:**

**Please visit the CDC website at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html).**