



Wellness During COVID-19: A Complete Guide to Staying Healthy

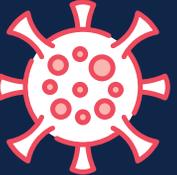


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Introduction

The negative impacts of COVID-19 show no signs of slowing down. As of December 2020, the [United States](#) had more than 13 million COVID-19 cases, with new cases increasing rapidly every day. So far, over 260,000 individuals have died from COVID-19 in the U.S.

While the risk is real for everyone, those with underlying medical conditions are at a higher risk and should take extra precautions, according to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#). This includes people with:

- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus
- Heart conditions, such as coronary artery disease
- Chronic kidney disease

With the elevated health risk the pandemic brings, it's more important than ever to embrace wellness and do everything possible to boost your immunity. Although access to many health-related services are limited, you can find creative ways to embrace wellness during this season.

The suggestions in this eBook are meant to help you maintain your health and increase the odds of beating the virus, should you contract it, even as you continue to isolate yourself and social distance.

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CHAPTER 1:

Get Educated

With so much information floating around about the virus, let's start with education to understand the virus, your risk, and what to do if you feel sick.

You can find COVID-19 information from official organizations like the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) and [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#). Both of these resources offer straightforward guidelines backed by research and science to help you understand the basics of the virus, its symptoms, and general guidelines to follow to avoid it.



TIP: If you see something online, whether on a social media platform like Facebook, a blog, a news site, or YouTube that seems odd or confusing, always cross-reference the information with the CDC and WHO to ensure accuracy.



1. Understand the Symptoms

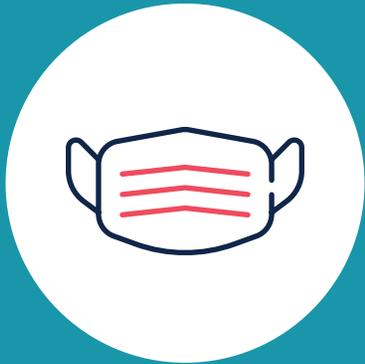
Although symptoms vary from one person to the next and some carry the virus without ever showing any symptoms, here's what you need to keep an eye out for:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- New headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

The spread of COVID-19 is trickier to manage given asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic individuals. According to [Gundersen Health System](#), asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic people can contribute to the quick spread of COVID-19 and are defined as follows:

- **Asymptomatic** individuals have the infection but show no symptoms and will not develop them later.
- **Pre-symptomatic** individuals have the infection but don't have any symptoms yet. They typically show symptoms about 2–3 days later.

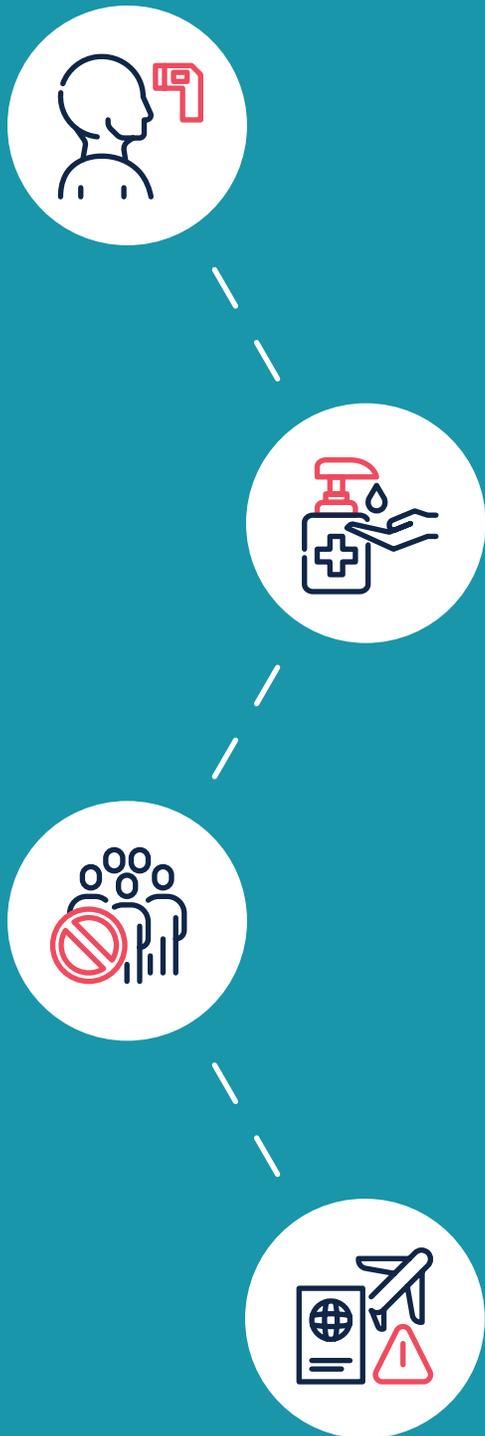
Knowing that some people carry the virus without showing symptoms is another reason why it's so important to follow the proper precautions and practice social distancing, wearing masks, using proper hygiene, and self-quarantining.



2. Take the Proper Precautions

If you must leave your home, follow these guidelines.

- **Wear a mask:** Most of us only need them for a small part of our day; it's a small sacrifice that is critically important for the health and wellbeing of the people around you. You can order disposable masks from almost any local store or supermarket. You can also opt for reusable cloth masks by [sewing your own](#) or ordering one from a company you like. Regardless of which mask you choose, [wear it over your mouth and nose](#) and avoid touching it while you have it on. You should also wash cloth masks after each use.
- **Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer often:** We hear it often, but it's really one of our best defenses against the spread of COVID-19 as well as the common cold and flu. Opt for washing your hands when you can, but keep hand sanitizer with you to use if you're out running errands.
- **Social distancing:** Even if you're washing your hands and wearing a mask, you should still try to keep a distance of at least six feet from others. Avoid highly populated places and check to see if the store or business you need to visit has special shopping hours for people with elevated health risks. Where applicable, try to shop during those times to limit exposure.



3. Get Familiar with Local Guidelines

The guidelines in the section above are a solid starting point, but it's important to know what precautions are mandated in your specific state or community as some regulations vary from one place to the next. For example, as of December 2020, [37 states](#) as well as the District of Columbia mandated face masks in public.

You can find your local and state guidelines by visiting the official government websites of both your city and state. Once there, you should see a link or callout to COVID-19 updates on their home page. Navigate there to see the number of cases and deaths, regulations, tips, and more.

If the two ever contradict each other and you're unsure of which guidelines to observe, as a general rule, follow whichever is strictest. For example, if your state has no gathering size restrictions, but your county isn't allowing gatherings of more than 10 people, follow the county's guidelines. Or, if your state mandates face masks in all public areas but your town doesn't, follow the state's protocol. It's always better to err on the side of caution.

Testing locations can usually be found on your local and/or state government's websites. Most areas have at least one testing station nearby and readily accessible to local residents. If you're having trouble locating a testing station, you can reach out to your healthcare provider or pharmacist for help or explore the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services webpage](#) for community-based testing sites.



4. Ask Your Provider Team for Help

Make sure to verify your perceived risk and the subsequent precautions you are taking with your health provider team. Whether you schedule an in-person or virtual visit, you can use your appointment to gather more personalized information unique to your health situation.

Here are some questions to ask:

- What is my current risk?
- How can I limit my risk?
- What ways can I boost my health right now?
- What steps should I take if I contract the virus, or if I think I have contracted it?
- What do I need to know regarding my current condition and how it relates to COVID-19?

TIP: If you can't find the right information, don't understand your risk, or aren't sure about how to locate the nearest testing site, reach out to your pharmacist! They can even help you set up a virtual or in-person appointment with your doctor if you have other health concerns.

2

CHAPTER 2:

Control What You Can

Limit health risks and boost your immune system by focusing on the things in your life that you can control. You might not be able to stop your family from seeing each other and their extended family or friends, but you can control whether or not they enter your home. While these are difficult decisions to make, by taking stock of what is in your control and then following through on best practices, you can lessen your exposure and mitigate your risk. In this chapter, you'll learn how you can do that in three important areas: nutrition, physical movement and mental health.

1. Nutrition

Food is one of the best ways to get the nutrients your body needs. If your provider has outlined a specific diet related to combating an underlying condition, follow it consistently and ask if there is anything else you should add in to boost your immunity. If you don't have any guidelines, here are a few places to start.

- Make fruits and vegetables a part of your daily diet. This is an easy way to get different nutrients like Vitamin C.
- Add in salmon, canned tuna, and seafood for Vitamin D. A few minutes in the sunshine every day helps too!
- Get zinc naturally from lean meat, seafood, legumes, nuts, and seeds.
- Cut out sodium by avoiding highly processed foods. Yes, they make meal prep easier, but they provide little nutrition to your body.



TIP: *If you have difficulty accessing food, contact local food banks or dial 211 from your home or mobile phone to see what help is available in your area. You can also ask friends or family if they may help you by picking up items from the grocery store so you can avoid contact with others. If no one is available to help you pick up groceries and you're unable to do so yourself, consider a grocery delivery service. Check with your local grocery store to see if they deliver or use a service like [Shipt](#) or [Amazon Prime](#) to order groceries online and have them delivered to your home.*

Those raw veggies and beans can also serve as an excellent source of fiber, and you can count on getting healthy fat with foods like avocados, fish, nuts and seeds.

If you have restrictions preventing you from getting these nutrients through food, you can also opt for supplements, commonly referred to as vitamins, multi-vitamins, or nutraceuticals. In fact, many rely on supplements to boost their immunity and strength especially with the elevated health risk of COVID-19. Though there is no research on whether supplementation can prevent and/or treat COVID-19, the Cleveland Clinic notes that it's "biologically plausible" for some to have a positive effect on prevention and treatment of COVID-19.

If you're new to supplements, or don't know what may help prevent COVID-19 and/or aid in treatment, consider zinc, vitamin D and vitamin C. According to the [Cleveland Clinic](#):

- **Zinc** plays a role in antibody and white blood cell production and can fight infection.
- Sufficient **vitamin D** may decrease risk of acute respiratory infections.
- **Vitamin C**, or ascorbic acid, can be used to positively support the overall immune system.

Check with your provider team or pharmacist to see whether any supplements you take could cause any kind of adverse reaction when mixed with your other medication. As a bonus, when you check in with your provider, make sure to also ask about other supplements your doctor or pharmacist may recommend specifically for you.



MEN



WOMEN

Another way you can take care of your health is to drink enough water. Drinking water helps with digestion, keeps your joints lubricated, protects sensitive tissue and helps maintain a normal body temperature.

Although the amount necessary varies per person, you can use the [Mayo Clinic's guidelines](#) as a starting point:

- About **15.5 cups (3.7 liters)** of fluids for men
- About **11.5 cups (2.7 liters)** of fluids a day for women

If you're a particularly active person, live in a hotter and more humid climate, or get sick a lot, you'll likely need more than the recommended intake. One rule of thumb to keep in mind as you start watching your water intake is this: if you wait to drink water until you feel thirsty, you're likely already dehydrated. Avoid this by timing your water intake. For example, set a timer to remind you to drink a glass of water every 2-3 hours throughout the day, starting when you wake up.



2. Physical Movement

Regular physical movement can have immense benefits, particularly for aging adults. According to [The GreenFields](#), it boosts mental health, helps exercise cognitive function and keep dementia at bay, improves overall immune function to prevent disease, and much more!

If you don't yet have a regular routine for physical movement, here are some ideas to get you started:

- **Try a daily walk or bike ride!** This can be a great way to get your day started or to spend an afternoon. Start with a block or two and set a goal to increase your distance each day.
- **Take a break from work or your hobby.** Set a reminder or alarm to alert you to stand up and walk around the house for a few minutes every other hour. This is a great time to refill your water glass, step out on the porch for a few minutes of fresh air, and more.
- **Stretches during the day.** If you don't like or are unable to walk long distances, try stretching. Whether it's your own five-minute stretch in the morning or a short yoga session at night, doing daily stretches is a great way to add some movement to your life.

Regardless of how you choose to add physical activity into your day, the only thing that matters is that you do it! Even something as simple as dancing around the kitchen while dinner is cooking can help lift the spirit and refresh the body.



3. Mental Health

Equally important to our physical health is our mental health. It's no surprise that [mental health issues have spiked](#) since the onset of COVID-19 as people are confined to their homes, unsure of job security, and worried about exposure to the virus.

So, how is your stress level?

Did you know that [chronic stress](#) can have a tremendous impact on your immune system? In fact, stress decreases the body's white blood cells (lymphocytes), which are responsible for fighting off infections. Chronic stress can also lead to depression and/or anxiety—both of which increase inflammation in the body, increasing susceptibility to viruses like COVID-19.

The best thing you can do is find natural ways to lower your stress so you aren't just sitting around and worrying. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- **Connect with family and friends** via digital tools like FaceTime, Zoom, and more. Regular 10–15 minute check-ins can help you to feel connected despite not being able to visit or host people.
- **Take up a hobby.** It's helpful right now to have something to do with your hands to stay active. For example, try taking care of a few new house plants (which improves air quality). If you're already a master gardener, you may try watercolor painting, build a model plane, or take a [Skillshare](#) class.



- **Turn off the news.** Although it's necessary to stay informed of what's going on, constantly having the news on in the background can create unnecessary fear and worry. Try setting limits on news consumption. For example: if you typically leave the TV or radio on all day, start by simply turning it off while you eat your meals. Or, if you watch the morning, afternoon, and evening news regularly, try cutting out just one for a few weeks and see how you feel. This will also free up some of your time to read a book or schedule more video calls with your family and friends.
- **Stick to a routine to make sure you get your exercise and sleep.** Just these few habits alone can have a huge positive impact on both your mental and physical health, according to [Northwestern Medicine](#). If you're not a routine-driven person, start small by either setting an alarm to get up at the same time every morning or to turn the phone and TV off at the same time each night.

These are just a few ideas to get you started! You can explore other [ideas from Psychology Today](#) for more ways to stay mentally healthy while you're stuck at home.

These suggestions might seem simple and even common, but the important thing is to actually do them. Most of us know we need to drink water, but do we actually do it? If you need some extra motivation, remember that all of these will help boost your immune system to keep you healthier and better equipped to fight off COVID-19 or other common illnesses should you get sick.

3

CHAPTER 3:

Take Your Medication

A critical key to wellness during this unprecedented time is to take your medication regularly and as prescribed by your healthcare provider team. Recall that individuals with underlying conditions have an **increased health risk** when it comes to COVID-19, so this is especially important if that describes you.

It's more important than ever to take your medication consistently and correctly.

Compliance to the medication routine that your provider team has put together for you helps keep other conditions under control and may keep you from ending up in the hospital, ER, or urgent care should an underlying condition flare up because medication isn't taken properly. Staying on top of your medication routine in order to stay as healthy as possible is important, because hospitalization would likely increase your risk of exposure to COVID-19. Taking your medication every day also ensures that you're doing all you can to keep your underlying conditions under control, leaving your body better prepared to fight infections and COVID-19 exposure should either of those occur.

How to Simplify Your Medication Routine

Complying with the medication routine your provider team has created for you may feel a little more difficult than normal with everything else that is going on in the world. To help you stay on track, here are a few steps and guidelines you can follow.

- 1.** To make sure you always have a supply, schedule reminders to re-order and pick up your medication. If you pick up your medication at the local pharmacy but don't want to risk exposure, you can opt for the drive thru, have family or a friend pick it up, or explore delivery service.
- 2.** Use a pill box to organize your medication. Make a routine to measure your pills and organize them for each day of the week. Alternatively, ask your pharmacist to prepare your medications or you. Many pharmacies provide this service at very low or no cost!
- 3.** Take advantage of telehealth and keep up with your provider check-ins. If you struggle with your medication routine, let your provider know in your check-ins. Ask for their recommendations and be sure to share if you're having a hard time with your physical or mental health.
- 4.** Don't forget about your pharmacists! Contact them with any medication questions or concerns you have about COVID-19, medication adherence, side effects, etc. They are an extension of your care team and should be your first point of contact for medication-related questions.

TIP: If you don't have a healthcare provider right now or don't think you can afford one, contact your [community health center](#) or [health department](#) to see what resources are available to you.



A Simpler Pharmacy Solution

If you're having a hard time accessing your medication or the medical advice you need to navigate this season, the AdhereRx team is here to help.

AdhereRx is a private courier delivery pharmacy tailored for people with chronic conditions or complicated medication routines. Our customers typically fall into one of the following categories:

- High-risk patients with 6 or more chronic medications
- Medications that may change frequently
- Medicare or Medicaid coverage
- Could benefit from a monthly medication review with a licensed clinician
- Have multiple providers who prescribe medication
- Need assistance with medication management
- Benefit from safe home delivery

If one or more of the above sounds like you, AdhereRx can help! We are staffed by licensed pharmacists and pharmacy technicians and work closely with you and your doctor to make sure medications are safe and effective. Here are some of the benefits you receive as an AdhereRx customer.



1. No-contact courier delivery for all your medications.

HIPAA-certified [private couriers](#) deliver all of your medications — including all levels of controlled substances and refrigerated medications that many pharmacies cannot ship — in one package each month, and you only pay the cost of your co-pay. We even offer flexible payment methods. You can schedule deliveries ahead of time to ensure on-time delivery when it's most convenient for you. And with each delivery, you'll get an up-to-date list of medications to bring with you to your next provider visit.

2. Monthly health checks + 24/7 access to our pharmacists.

With AdhereRx, you get a [personalized medication review](#) every month with our team of pharmacists and clinicians. We use this one-on-one discussion to chat about any medication changes your provider has prescribed and address any concerns or general health-related questions you may have, including:

- Information on COVID-19, guidelines and testing sites
- Questions you have regarding your health and wellness
- Guidance on your medication, side effects and other medication concerns
- How to set up televisits with other members of your provider team or preparing for an in-person visit

Beyond monthly visits, you can reach out at any time to our pharmacists and clinicians. They're available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week to assist and guide you!





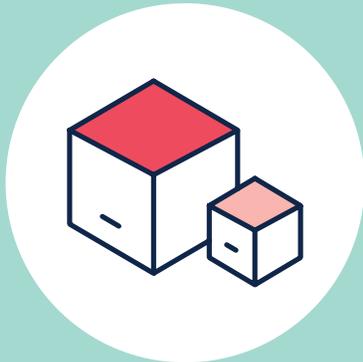
3. Complex care coordination.

We work directly with you and your entire care team to make necessary adjustments to your medication routine and coordinate for refills, as needed. With this coordination, every provider you see will be up to date on your complete medication routine, so you won't need to worry about updating them every time you have a change. Plus, you don't have to pay anything more than your co-pay for this care coordination—it's included in our service!



4. 30-day supply to keep flexibility with medications.

We know that both medications and health conditions change. To help you make easy switches when your provider changes your routine, we only fill your medication one month at a time. With AdhereRx, you aren't stuck with a 90-day supply that you don't need anymore. By only filling your medication on a 30-day schedule, you have the flexibility to switch as needed, saving you money and preventing medication waste.





How AdhereRx Works

Interested in trying AdhereRx? Here's how it works.

You can ask your primary care provider about AdhereRx or go to [adhererx.com/enroll-now](https://www.adhererx.com/enroll-now) to get started. Our team will work with you to complete your enrollment in the AdhereRx program.

Once enrolled, you can schedule your next delivery date and start benefiting from monthly check-in calls with our pharmacists. It's that simple.

Interested in making the switch? Get started by requesting more information!

PHONE
866.463.5550

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