

COVID-19: Coronavirus Information

Coronaviruses are common and are estimated to cause about 33% of common colds. Health organizations are still learning about the novel strain, COVID-19. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) and Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) collaboratively take the lead on decisions regarding school closures or other impact on schools that could result from outbreaks of contagious conditions. They monitor local and national health concerns and are connected with major health organizations with access to up-to-date information.

Prevention

The most significant things you can do to protect yourself and your family from contagious conditions are the same preventative practices that we promote every year during cold and flu season:

- **Wash your hands regularly**, especially after using the restroom and before preparing or consuming food. Wash for 20 seconds, using soap and hot water. Be sure to also wash your fingertips.
- **Cover a cough**. Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hands or in the air. Always try to cough or sneeze into a tissue, and then throw the tissue away. If you don't have a tissue, cough/sneeze into your arm.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, mouth and nose.**
- **If children are feeling sick, please keep them home from school and activities.** Allow them some time to feel better so they do not risk infecting others. Adults also should stay home if they feel unwell.

Social Distancing: What Does It Mean?

Social distancing means reducing close contact between people to slow the spread of infectious diseases. Slowing the spread of the virus will help our hospitals care for patients.

MDH Hotline

If you are concerned that you or a family member may have been exposed to COVID-19, please contact the Minnesota Department of Health Hotline: 651-201-3504, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.