



Limiting Transmission of COVID-19 Coronavirus in Residential Settings

1 What is Coronavirus

The current Coronavirus outbreak has been the cause of significant concern to both the general public and healthcare and government officials. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that cause human illness in people ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases including Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). A novel coronavirus (nCoV) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans.

Coronaviruses are zoonotic, meaning they are transmitted between animals and people. Detailed investigations found that SARS-CoV was transmitted from a species of cats to humans.

Common signs of infection include respiratory symptoms, fever, cough, shortness of breath and breathing difficulties. In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia, severe acute respiratory syndrome, kidney failure and even death.

1.1 How is it spread

COVID-19 is spread primarily via aerosols (sneezing/coughing) or via prolonged contact (hug/handshake etc) with someone who is carrying the virus. In addition, coming in contact with an item or surface which has the virus present and then touching eyes, nose or mouth can also result in viral transmission.

Currently those currently at greatest risk include seniors, those with weak or compromised immune systems or those with a pre-existing medical condition.

2 Preventative Measures for your Home

2.1 Cleaning and Disinfectant Measures

- Soap is highly effective method of killing COVID-19 on hands and surfaces. The amphiphilic properties of soap allow it to de-activate and destroy viruses present on a given surface. It is recommended that a minimum contact time of 20 seconds be implemented prior to rinsing to ensure effectiveness of the soap.
- Routinely clean areas of regular external contact (counters, doors, tables) with soap and water or an alcohol based cleaner (minimum 60% alcohol)

2.2 Hygiene Measures

- Wash hands frequently with soap, again utilizing a minimum contact time of 20 seconds, to ensure effectiveness of the soap. Rinse thoroughly after washing.
- Cover your mouth/nose with arm/sleeve when coughing or sneezing to avoid spreading of aerosols
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth, and wash hands after contacting them.
- Regularly clean commonly handled household items with a dilute bleach solution (1:9) or household disinfectant cleaner. These include:
 - Cellphones, laptops, remotes, telephones, toys, door handles and any other commonly shared items.

3 Additional Precautions and Resources

Anyone who has recently travelled internationally, particularly in currently identified “hot-spots” for COVID-19 including China and Italy should self monitor and if flu-like symptoms are noted, should stay at home unless immediate medical aid is required.

Social-isolation is also strongly recommended as a means to both reduce personal exposure, as well as reduce overall viral transmission to avoid overloading existing healthcare resources. Due to the highly contagious nature of COVID-19, a sudden spike in those infected required immediate medical assistance would cause substantial, potentially crippling strain on the health care system.

Additional resources from Health Canada have been provided below which will have the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19 in Canada.

- [Being Prepared for COVID-19](#)
- [Symptoms and Treatment](#)
- [Additional Awareness Resources](#)