

# **DON'T PANIC!**

## **HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY FROM COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS**

**WHAT DO WE KNOW?** 80% of people who are infected with COVID-19 will not get very sick. It is more serious for the elderly and those with chronic medical problems. COVID-19 is spread through respiratory droplets, so you can only get it if you are within 6 feet of an infected person who is coughing or sneezing, or if you pick up fluids on your hands and then accidentally transfer it to your eyes, nose or mouth. The virus can live for several days on hard surfaces, though, and people who are infected may be contagious for up to two weeks before they get sick. There is currently no effective treatment. The current order to shelter in place is so that we can buy more time to develop vaccines and treatments, and therefore it's important that everyone work together to keep each other safe.

**SHOULD I GET TESTED?** If you have fever, cough, or shortness of breath, regardless of whether you know if you have been exposed or not, you should assume until proven otherwise that you have COVID-19. Isolate yourself from high risk members of your household, or if your whole household has been exposed, isolate the entire household for 14 days or until you have no symptoms for 72 hours, whichever is later.

**WILL THERE BE A VACCINE?** Scientists in many countries are working hard on a vaccine. However, the process of making and testing a new vaccine can take 12-18 months, so don't expect one to be available this year.

**CAN I GET A PRESCRIPTION FOR CHLOROQUINE?** No. There is no actual clinical evidence that chloroquine, hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin or zinc sulfate are useful for prevention or treatment of COVID-19. The chloroquines are medications that are important for patients with serious chronic diseases such as lupus and rheumatoid arthritis, so it's crucial that we not waste our supply of medication on unproven treatments. It is being investigated as quickly as possible in a clinical trial to see if it is actually helpful.

**SHOULD I STOP TAKING MY ACE INHIBITOR OR ARB BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATION?** No. These medications ("pril" and "sartan" type) have not been shown to make people with COVID-19 get sicker. The risks of stopping your medication and having your blood pressure be uncontrolled are much higher.

**CAN I LEAVE THE HOUSE?** With the exception of essential workers, no one should leave the house except for groceries, medical care, or exercise. If you do go out, maintain 6 feet distance from people not in your household, do not touch your face, and wash your hands before getting back in your car or home.

- **DO:**
  - Cover your mouth with your sleeve or a tissue when you cough
  - Wash your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer, especially after sneezing, coughing, or touching surfaces in public places
  - Keep an arm's distance away from people who appear to be ill or coughing
  - Keep your hands away from your face and eyes
  - wear a face covering when you are in public places to protect other people from your own secretions
  
- **DON'T:**
  - Assume that you can't get sick if you haven't traveled to another country
  - Come to the office if you are sick without calling first. We **MUST** screen you by phone or video first.
  - Hoard food, toilet paper, disinfectants or masks. We need to make sure that everyone has access to essential supplies. More supplies will be available in time so just make sure you have enough for your family for a few weeks.

4/4/20