

COVID-19 Caring for the Elderly

Health Advocate Can Help



If you're caring for an elderly loved one, you may have many questions and concerns

about their health and medical needs amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. Adults age 60 and older—especially those with preexisting medical conditions, such as heart disease, lung disease, diabetes or cancer, are more likely to get a severe coronavirus infection than other age groups.

Be assured that our experienced clinical team of medical doctors, registered nurses and other healthcare professionals will guide you so you can make the best health decisions for your loved one.

When a member calls, our clinical team will:



Obtain a detailed history of your loved one and their current health status and guide you to contact their Primary Care Physician (PCP) or other healthcare provider, if necessary



Direct you to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for current recommendations



Direct you to the current recommendations from your loved one's state and local public health departments



Provide educational materials based on the CDC recommendations regarding prevention of COVID-19, including special information regarding caring for the elderly



Discuss emotional well-being and additional resources as needed, such as counseling or community support

More ways we can help 



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Our Nurses can also help with the following concerns:



Symptoms

The Nurses will complete a comprehensive intake, and:

- Discuss symptoms
- Clarify infection risk factors according to current CDC guidelines
- Help locate a Primary Care Provider or other appropriate provider
- Educate about telemedicine services
- Guide to emergency care if appropriate



Exposure Avoidance and Hygiene

The Nurses will provide information about:

- Social distancing
- Preventive measures such as proper handwashing
- Tips for staying well



Questions about Testing/Labs

- Review current CDC testing guidelines
- Explain how testing is done
- Research testing locations



Pharmacy/Medication/Vaccination

- Help to ensure that members have continued access to routine/maintenance medications as well as new medications and help ensure cost effective means to secure treatment
- Assist with inquiries related to influenza and other vaccinations as well as inquiries related to therapies or vaccines as they become available for COVID-19



Travel

- Review the most current travel advisory information from the CDC regarding travel recommendations and restrictions

Important!

Symptoms of exposure?

Call your healthcare providers ahead of visiting.

If you or your loved one learn that you might have been exposed to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 or if anyone in your household develops symptoms such as cough, fever or shortness of breath, call your healthcare provider.

For a medical emergency

The CDC states if you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately.

Emergency warning signs include*:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.



Important tips for caregivers



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Important Tips for Caregivers of Elderly Loved Ones:



Follow local recommendations for social distancing and remember to do the following:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before and after providing care, preparing food, using the bathroom, or touching surfaces in public places.
- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or into a disposable tissue.
- Keep your hands away from your face.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces often, including mobility and medical equipment used by your loved one, such as walkers, canes and handrails.



Minimize the risk of COVID-19 infection

- Postpone unnecessary doctor visits, if your loved one is feeling well, including elective procedures, and annual checkups. If their doctor offers telemedicine, help them communicate over video or email.
- Avoid travel. Older adults should put off non-essential travel, particularly cruises or trips with itineraries that would expose them to crowds.



Help your loved one stay connected

- Show them how to video chat with others using smartphones, laptops or tablets.
- Use apps on these devices to provide captions for adults with hearing challenges.
- Encourage friends and family outside of your household to telephone, write notes or send cards to lift your loved one's spirits.
- Faith communities are often a big part of older adults' social lives. Help your loved one access online faith services and outreach for spiritual solace and support.
- Give your loved one a project to work on. They may need help with organizing photos or selecting favorite family recipes, providing an opportunity to share stories and happy memories with others in the household.

Source: <https://bit.ly/2xCrFLY>