What you need to know about COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

Dear Household,

The respiratory disease COVID-19 has captured the attention of the world because of its quick spread and potential to cause severe illness in some people.

At the Ministry of Health, your health and wellbeing is our main priority, and we are working hard to protect you....But we need your help.

We urge you to take action to protect yourself, your family and your neighbourhood communities from this global threat.

Please read the information contained in this leaflet carefully. Get informed. Make a plan. Be prepared.

We are learning more about this outbreak all the time, and we will share information with you as the situation evolves. For local updates visit www.gov.bm/coronavirus.

Stay informed to stay well.

The Ministry of Health

What is COVID-19?

COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently-discovered coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- fever;
- tiredness; and
- dry cough

Some persons may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but don't develop any symptoms and don't feel unwell.

What should I do if I think I have been exposed to COVID-19?

- Call your doctor.
- Tell them your symptoms and travel history.
- Follow your doctor's guidance.

How does COVID-19 spread?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

If you think a surface may be infected, clean it with simple disinfectant to kill the virus and protect yourself and others.

People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. Try to maintain at least two metre (six feet) distance between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.

How can my family and I prepare for COVID-19?

Create a household plan of action to help protect your health and the health of those you care about in the event of an outbreak of COVID-19 in Bermuda:

- Talk with the people who need to be included in your plan, and discuss what to do if a COVID-19 outbreak occurs.
- Plan ways to care for those who might be at greater risk for serious complications, particularly older adults and those with severe chronic medical conditions like heart, lung or kidney disease. Make sure they have access to several weeks of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for prolonged periods of time.
- Create an emergency contact list of family, friends, neighbours, carpool drivers, health care providers, teachers, employers, the local public health department, and other community resources.

What steps can my family take to reduce the risk of getting COVID-19?

Practice everyday preventive actions to help reduce your risk of getting sick and remind everyone in your home to do the same. These actions are especially important for older adults and people who have severe chronic medical conditions:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue and throw the tissue in the trash.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or

preparing food.

- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects. (e.g. tables, countertops, light switches, doorknobs, and cabinet handles). For disinfection, most common household disinfectants should be effective.

What should I do if I or someone in my house gets COVID-19?

Most people who get COVID-19 will be able to recover at home. For those individuals:

- Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
- Please seek medical attention immediately; if you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19 get medical attention immediately. These include: difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, inability to arouse and/or bluish lips or face.
- Use a separate room and bathroom for sick household members (if possible).
- Clean hands regularly by handwashing with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Provide your sick household member with clean disposable facemasks to wear at home, if available, to help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.
- Clean the sick room and bathroom, as needed, to avoid unnecessary contact with the sick person.
- Avoid sharing personal items like utensils, food, and drinks.

What is Government doing to respond to the global threat of COVID-19?

- Enhancing surveillance and laboratory testing to detect cases.
- Procuring Personal Protective Equipment for our front-line workers.
- Adapting our emergency response protocols.
- Improving protection measures at all ports of entry.
- Deploying specialized health professionals where most needed and ensuring they receive the appropriate training.
- Providing recommendations for healthcare infection control and other measures to prevent disease spread.
- Working to inform healthcare providers about proper response protocols.
- And disseminating up-to-date information to the general public, international travelers, and public health partners.

I am hearing a lot about 'social distancing'. What does that mean?

Social distancing measures are taken to restrict how, when and where people can gather to prevent, stop or slow the spread of infectious diseases. Social distancing measures include:

- Maintaining at least two metre (six feet) distance between yourself and others in group settings.
- Limiting large groups of people coming together.
- Closing buildings.
- Cancelling events.
- Reducing the use of non-essential public transport and recommending more people work from home.

Where can I go for more information?
www.gov.bm/coronavirus

1

CLEANSE HANDS
Frequently cleanse hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

2

COVER NOSE AND MOUTH
When coughing or sneezing cover your nose and mouth.

3

AVOID CLOSE CONTACT
Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

4

AVOID TRAVEL
If you have a fever, cough or flu-like symptoms, avoid travel.

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Ministry of Health