

# CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)



## Guidance for **OLDER ADULTS**

For more info. on coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)  
Call: 16000, or visit: [www.moph.gov.qa](http://www.moph.gov.qa)



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PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CORPORATION

## Who is this guidance for?

This guidance is for the older adults in Qatar

## What is Coronavirus disease (Covid-19)?

COVID-19 is a highly contagious disease with symptoms including fever, cough and shortness of breath.

## How do people get infected?

Coronavirus is transmitted, like any other viruses that attack the respiratory system, from one infected person to another in the droplets when they sneeze, cough or speak especially if at a distance of less than two meters. It can also be transmitted through close contact with the infected person or touching surfaces.

## Are older people at higher risk?

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus. While most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience a mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment, older people are more likely to develop serious illnesses.

If you are over 65 years of age, especially if you have underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer, you can experience more severe symptoms and are more likely to need intensive hospital care if you get the infection.

## What measure should older people follow to protect themselves?

- Follow the instructions of MoPH by practicing physical distancing, staying home, avoiding crowds, parks and refraining from touching one another or surfaces
- Personal hygiene is extremely important at this time of the virus outbreak. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based solution (60%) or a sanitizer
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth (or ensure you wash your hands before and after)
- Refrain from having visitors – this means not having family and friends visiting, including young children as even though the children might not be sick, they could be carriers of the virus
- Avoid sharing living areas with family members - Try to stay in a separate room to the rest of the family use a separate bathroom
- Keep your distance from other people - maintain at least a 2 meter distance between yourself and anyone around you

- Avoid physical contact with others - refrain from kissing, shaking hands or hugging as a greeting
- Maintain a clean environment – regularly clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces
- Ensure household staff follow good practices - if you employ household and/or private nursing staff, ensure they adhere to the strict hygiene protocols of hand washing and ask them to keep a mask on when near you

## Is it important for older people to continue taking regular medication?

It is important for anyone who has to take regular medication to continue with this, especially if you have chronic conditions or other illnesses that require you to take regular medication.

If you need physical help in taking your medications, make sure whoever gives the medication washed their hand well before and after completing the task.

Ensure you have enough medication doses so you don't run out. If you need a repeat prescription you can call your family physician. Please allow someone else to pick up the prescription and medication, even if you feel fine and have always done this yourself. Don't put yourself or your family at risk if you don't have to.

## What should older people do if they get the virus?

If you are showing symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, fever or shortness of breath you may need assessment by healthcare professional. Start self-quarantine, avoid any contact with others and call the national

Practice the "Sick day rules" for older people:

- Check your blood pressure more often
- Reduce sodium (salt) and fat (that leads to higher cholesterol) in your diet
- Do not stop your medication unless directed by your doctor;
- Rest and postpone exercise
- Monitor temperature, when needed use acetaminophen (Paracetamol/ Panadol) rather than anti-inflammatory (Ibuprofen/ Advil);
- Always follow healthcare professional team recommendations.

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