

caregiving during crisis



If you're taking care of a loved one during the COVID-19 pandemic, it's important to prepare. Your goal should be to do as much as you can to limit your loved one's exposure to the virus, as well as your own.

The CDC's Advice:



Keep extra medication on hand. Contact healthcare providers if you need renewed prescriptions—many refill rules have been relaxed during the pandemic.



Keep an eye on the medical supplies your loved one needs—oxygen, incontinence supplies, wound care, and more. Also make sure you have common needs like tissues and cough syrup.



It's best to stay home for as long as possible. Having plenty of nonperishable food on hand will help.



If you have a loved one in a care facility, the facility may limit your ability to visit. You should still monitor the situation, ask about the health of residents, and know the protocol if there is an outbreak.

Exposure Dos and Don'ts:

Even if your person is in semi-quarantine, you may still be out in the community. This means you might risk exposing your loved one to COVID-19. But there are precautions you can take to minimize the risk.



- ✓ High-risk populations should avoid restaurants, shops, and grocery stores if possible
- ✓ If you shop for someone else, leave the items at the door—don't bring them in
- ✓ Make online orders if you can



- ✓ Wash your hands with soap and warm water regularly, especially after eating, using the restroom, and entering the home
- ✓ Wipe down door handles, remote controls, phones, and steering wheels regularly with disinfectant wipes

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Exposure Dos and Don'ts, cont.:



- ✓ If it's not essential, consider rescheduling appointments
- ✓ For important medical appointments, ask if telephone or video appointments are an option



- ✓ If you care for a loved one at home, find the time to slow down and spend quality time with them



- ✓ Social isolation can affect the mental health of both patients and caregivers.
- ✓ Try to increase contact by phone, video, text, and online communication
- ✓ Let your loved ones know they can contact you anytime
- ✓ Video chats are a powerful option; seeing a loved one is a powerful tool against loneliness

No Disinfectant Wipes? No Problem.

The CDC has shared advice for making your own disinfectant in a pinch:

Some surfaces can be cleaned with a diluted bleach solution. To make a bleach solution, mix: 5 tablespoons (1/3rd cup) bleach per 1 gallon of room temperature water.

- ✓ Check if your bleach is intended for disinfection and has a sodium hypochlorite concentration of 5%–6%
- ✓ Ensure the product is not past its expiration date—unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted
- ✓ Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation
- ✓ Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser
- ✓ Leave solution on the surface for at least a minute

