



COVID-19 has reached Minnesota. Though daily news reports have increased people's anxiety, it is important to remember that most people will recover from COVID-19, experiencing mild to moderate symptoms. That being said, we need to take precautions to stop this disease from spreading at such a rate that it overwhelms our healthcare system. Those precautions need to start now.

First, recognize the symptoms of COVID-19 and STAY HOME if you are sick. Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Shortness of breath
- Having a cough that gets more severe over time
- A low-grade fever that gradually increases in temperature.

If you believe you have COVID-19 and you can manage your symptoms with home care, do so. If you are experiencing severe or concerning symptoms, call your clinic and speak to your provider or use an online resource, such as Dr. On Demand. If you experience any of the following emergency warning signs, get medical attention immediately:

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

Because you may carry the virus for COVID-19 for 2 days to 2 weeks before you become symptomatic (if you become symptomatic at all) it is important to practice good health hygiene. Practicing good hygiene can prevent the spread from reaching those more at risk, older adults and those with chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, and lung disease.

- Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, frequently. Use an alcohol based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Clean surfaces that are frequently touched on a daily basis: counters, doorknobs, light switches, faucets, tables, to name a few.
- Cough or sneeze in a tissue or paper towel, then throw it away in the trash and wash your hands. If those items aren't available, cough or sneeze in your sleeve. Wash coats frequently.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid high population areas. Shop during less popular hours or online.

- Observe a 6' perimeter from others, to reduce droplet contamination.

Additionally, families should consider creating a household plan of action in case the household is disrupted by COVID-19. Consider keeping a 2-week supply of prescriptions, food, and other essentials on hand. Know what your daycares, schools, and workplaces are planning. Consider if it is possible to telework.

Businesses should look at reviewing, updating or developing workplace plans, including liberal leave and telework policies, alternative team approaches for work schedules, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, ensuring hand hygiene supplies, and encouraging good health hygiene.

You can keep abreast of the COVID-19 situation by visiting CDC or MDH websites at

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

or call the MDH hotline at 651-201-3920, Monday – Friday 9 AM-4:30 PM.

For local information and changes in the situation, look here and to the Aitkin County Public Health Education, Aitkin County' Sheriff's and Riverwood Healthcare Center's Facebook pages.

HAVE BUSINESS AT THE COUNTY?

You can avoid public contact by doing business online, even Aitkin County business! You can pay property taxes, find parcel information, make campground reservations, complete marriage licenses, fill out building permits, and apply for Planning & Zoning Permits. To find links to services, look to the right side of the Aitkin County Website home page, for an updated listing! Additionally, many driver and vehicle services are available online at: <https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/dvs/online-self-services/Pages/default.aspx>.