

# 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 



**HealthAdvocate**<sup>SM</sup>

## 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.

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**Source:** <https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/conditions-and-diseases/coronavirus/coronavirus-caregiving-for-the-elderly>