

Hi Everyone:

It is devastating to us that a disproportionate number of deaths from Covid19 have been within the black and brown communities of this country. Emergency physicians are extremely concerned about the rate of infection and mortality that coronavirus is having on these communities. We want to give a personal safety message from concerned emergency physicians to high risk communities. It is our sincere hope that you will hear our concerns and that you will spread our message about risk and about safety recommendations within your communities. We ask that you use your various platforms (emails, newsletters, word of mouth, text messages, social media, etc.) to help us get the message out to others.

Please pass the following message within your communities:

1. Those that are aged 65 or older, those with medical conditions like diabetes, heart disease, cancer, strokes, asthma, and COPD, or those who are weak and sickly are at a higher risk of dying from Covid19. We must rally to protect them. Help them stay in a quarantined environment. Keep children away, limit all unnecessary visits, drop food and medicines off at their doorsteps while maintaining at least 6 feet of distance. Talk to them by phone or through the windows. It is important to check on them to make sure that they are staying healthy and encourage them to take their medications properly, eat healthy, and get rest. Take them to a physician only if they get ill until this Covid19 pandemic has passed. Most will be okay if they miss a scheduled checkup appointment during this time. If they need a prescription refilled, have them call their physician's office or the pharmacy rather than go in. Carefully consider any notion of them leaving home or of anyone visiting with them. Most importantly, refrain from visiting unless you absolutely must, because you may be a carrier and not know it.
2. Coronavirus is a disease that attacks the lungs putting people with lung disease at greater risk. Vaping and smoking of any kind increase your risk of severe coronavirus disease and death. Now is the time to stop all forms of smoking.
3. Alcohol weakens your immune system. Avoid alcohol. Please seek help if this is difficult for you to do without support.
4. If you are in good health and develop mild symptoms, you should stay home and take care of yourself like you would for a cold or flu. If you can manage your fever, body aches, nasal congestion, and other symptoms at home, then please do so. However, if your symptoms are getting worse, please seek help from a health care provider. You can call 211 to get a referral to a health care provider if you do not have one or go to the emergency department at that point.
5. Close your home to outside guests and visitors. Minimize any comings and goings from your residence. If you must have an outsider come to your home, make sure that they use nose and mouth covering and limit their access within your home. After they depart, wash and disinfect any surfaces they may have touched while they were there.

HEADQUARTERS

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6. Keep children inside the house or contained in your yard. Playing with the neighborhood children is discouraged. This invites an opportunity for them to bring infection into your home.
7. Wear a cover over your nose and mouth whenever you go away from home. Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze. If you must sneeze or cough without having a covering handy use the inside of your elbow to cover your nose and mouth.
8. Wash your hands often to keep from spreading germs. Avoid touching your eyes and face as much as possible.
9. Disinfect surfaces of your home often including doorknobs, counter tops, games, or other common surfaces. It is preferable that you use a bleach water solution or a solution with alcohol. However, if that is not available wash surfaces with any soapy solution you make or have available to decrease the concentration of surface germs.
10. Finally, do not minimize the role you play in keeping your entire community safe even if you are healthy or you do not feel ill. The best way to prevent illness is to avoid exposing yourself to it. This infection is also sometimes unknowingly spread through people who have no symptoms. Please do it with all you got! Stay home, stay off the streets, stay away from crowds and stay safe!

The Diversity, Inclusion and Health Equity Section of the American College of Emergency Physicians appreciates your support in getting this message out to your communities. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the section at diversity@acep.org.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



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