

# COVID-19: Stay Safe and Healthy

Current guidelines across the United States recommend limiting contact with others and many states have enacted 'shelter in place' orders to decrease the spread of COVID-19. Below are some tips for keeping yourself safe and healthy (both mentally and physically) while you practice physical distancing.

## Stay Safe

- Wash your hands regularly and for at least 20 seconds each time.
- Avoid touching your mouth, nose, and face with hands (especially in public).
- Limit going out and interacting with others unless necessary (work, groceries, doctor's appointments, etc.). This includes having people come to your home.
- Be mindful of others you may live with - if you have roommates or family members who are leaving your home more often than you, your risk of transmission may be higher.
- If you feel sick, call your health provider or use the local COVID-19 helpline to determine next steps. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, shortness of breath, and fatigue.
- Stay informed on COVID-19 from reliable sources such as the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control.

## Stay Healthy

- **Get moving!** Try to find some way to stay active - do bodyweight exercises at home or try yoga. You can also go for a walk, but check with local guidelines.
- **Do something you love!** Take time to read, play video games, watch movies, cook, whatever hobby or thing you like to do.
- **Connect with people!** Physical distance does NOT mean isolation - text family, video chat with friends, find ways to reach out and stay in touch.
- **Take care of your mental health.** These are very stressful times and many of us are feeling an impact on our mental health. Contact your campus for mental health support, these resources are still available to you.
- **It's OK not to be OK.** These are very challenging times, be gentle with yourself and practice self-care.

If you or someone you care about is feeling overwhelmed by feelings of anxiety, stress, depression, or sadness, contact the **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at [1-800-273-8255](tel:1-800-273-8255)** or **SAMHSA's Disaster Distress Helpline at [1-800-985-5990](tel:1-800-985-5990)**.

If you feel like you want to harm yourself or others or if you are at risk because of someone else's behavior, dial [911](tel:911).

For more updates, check out our website at [pip.missouri.edu](http://pip.missouri.edu) and find us on social media [@missouripip](https://twitter.com/missouripip)

# COVID-19 and Your Health

COVID-19 is a new disease caused by a novel strain of coronavirus, and may pose particular health risks for individuals who use certain substances.

## Substance Users with Increased Risk

- Tobacco/Nicotine users.
- Cannabis users.
- Opioid (prescription pain medications, heroin) users.

Since COVID-19 attacks the lungs, individuals who smoke or vape tobacco/nicotine or cannabis may be at higher risk for progression and adverse outcomes if infected. Use of these substances can also lower immune functioning, making risk of infection higher. Additionally, individuals who use opioids (prescription pain medications), may have lower respiratory and pulmonary functioning and could be at increased risk for negative outcomes of COVID-19<sup>1</sup>.

## Substance Use Safety

- **If able, avoid using substances.** Substance use can impact physical and mental health, which may be vulnerable during this time.
- **If you are using a substance, do not share paraphernalia** (e-cigs, cigarettes, pipes, etc.) with others as this can increase risk of transmitting COVID-19.
- **If you use opioids or have a friend or family member who uses,** have naloxone (also called Narcan) available in case of overdose.
- **Naloxone is available without a prescription at most pharmacies** and can be paid for out of pocket or with insurance.

## Resources for Substance Use

If you are in recovery or are hoping to quit substance use, below is a list of resources:

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA):** [samhsa.gov](https://www.samhsa.gov) or the National Helpline at [1-800-662-4357](tel:1-800-662-4357)
- **SMART Recovery:** [smartrecovery.org](https://www.smartrecovery.org)
- **Alcoholics Anonymous:** [aa.org](https://www.aa.org)
- **Narcotics Anonymous:** [na.org](https://www.na.org)
- **Connections App** (free download, chatting with counselors, tracking sobriety) [addictionpolicy.org/connections-app](https://addictionpolicy.org/connections-app) to receive a download link
- **Become an Ex (quitting tobacco/nicotine):** [becomeanex.org](https://www.becomeanex.org)
- **Medication Assisted Treatment for Opioid Use Disorder - SAMHSA:** [samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment](https://www.samhsa.gov/medication-assisted-treatment)

## COVID-19

- **Centers for Disease Control:** [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV)

1. National Institute on Drug Abuse. COVID-19: Potential Implications for Individuals with Substance Use Disorders. March 24 2020.