

Nurse's Notes

by Marie Angell Habershaw BSN, RN



COVID - 19

As the School Nurse at Immaculate Conception Catholic Regional School, it is one of my goals to be a guidepost for health and wellness. COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus, has been on the minds of many and I would like to share some critical information about this virus.

First, it is important to know the signs and symptoms of COVID-19. Fever, cough, and shortness of breath are all symptoms that may appear two to fourteen days after exposure. If you have any of these symptoms, contact your primary care physician or pediatrician and they will direct you in your recovery. Please do not immediately go to a hospital or health care center without talking to a medical professional first.

If you feel sick...

Please stay home unless your provider directs you to get medical care. People can usually recover quite well at home by getting plenty of rest, drinking fluids regularly, and staying away from people you might live with as much as possible.

Stay in touch with your doctor. Be sure to call them if you begin to feel worse, or even if you have questions.

Avoid public places - avoid public transportation, pharmacies, and grocery stores. Ask someone to pick up your supplies for now.

Keeping others safe

It is important to remain aware of how COVID-19 spreads. The virus is thought to be spread mainly from person to person. This means that it is critical to wash your hands often, keep them away from your face, and use alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not readily available. Wash after coughing, blowing your nose, using the bathroom, and before preparing or eating any food.

Clean all items touched often in your home with soap and water, then a disinfectant if possible. These include doorknobs, toilet flush handles, faucet handles, remotes, portable phones, cell phones, etc. EPA registered disinfectants should work just fine. However, if you run out you can make your own effective disinfectant.

Dilute your household bleach solution by using $\frac{1}{3}$ cup bleach to 1-gallon water. Or use 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water. Make sure you ventilate the area well while cleaning, and NEVER mix anything else with a bleach solution. I recommend using the quart measurement, as it should be mixed daily to be most effective.

Staying Healthy at Home

Taking care of your mental health is just as important as your physical health. Here are some tips to stay healthy - and sane - at home!

- **Check-in with family and friends** by phone routinely or on the internet. We are social beings, and it's important to maintain that connection.
- **Develop a schedule** of sorts for this new normal - this will give you purpose and direction. Just like our students, we all do better when we know what the game plan is.
- **Allow time away from the media!** It is important to be informed, but too much is overwhelming and increases our cortisol levels - which makes us more stressed! There is a very real link between stress and illness - we know that our immune system is needed to fight illness, so let's help it out!
- **Do something you enjoy every day**, even if it is not what you are used to. On nice days, sit outside for a while, plan a garden perhaps, or just play with your children or grandchildren.

Work-ins Instead of Work-outs

Here are a few excellent resources for exercise programs to participate in during social distancing. I've used several of these myself and have enjoyed them.

- Livestrong.com
- Silversneakers.com

Youtube.com has hundreds of videos for all age and fitness levels. Involve your kids and other family members that are home with you.



Silver Linings

While this is a difficult and stressful time for us all, let's remember to pause and reflect on our blessings. Take this time to be with your loved ones at home, to be present in every moment, and to practice positivity. This has been proven to be beneficial to our overall physical and mental health.

If I can be of any assistance, please feel free to email me at mhabershaw@iccatholicschool.org

Take Care!

Marie Angell Habershaw BSN, RN