

Keeping Yourself Healthy!

Hi Jennies Branch Church Family! With all the information circulating about the COVID-19 virus, I wanted to reach out and talk about how we can keep ourselves healthy.

Novel coronavirus or COVID-19 is a virus, which means someone with the infection cannot be treated with antibiotics to get better. Viruses work differently in the body than bacteria, so prevention is the most important part of keeping healthy. Here is what you can do to stay well:

1. Studies have shown that we touch our face around **15 times an hour**. So, you need to wash your hands. I mean *really* wash your hands - several times a day. You should start by getting your hands wet, lather up with your favorite soap, and use a little force to get the soap all over your hands (top and palm), between your fingers, around and under your nail beds. You should be washing your hands for about 20 seconds, or about the amount of time it takes to sing the Happy Birthday song twice. You can use alcohol-based hand sanitizer but do the same thing – generous squirt of sanitizer so that you can cover your **WHOLE** hand, between your fingers and into the nail beds.
2. If you do have a cough – cough into your elbow. If you cough into your hands, you are just spreading the virus onto everything you then touch.
3. If you need to sneeze, grab that tissue and then throw the soiled tissue away into a closed lid container. Then wash your hands.
4. If you are not feeling well, please stay home! We are still in influenza season and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) just extended the influenza season into mid-May. Normally, the season ends in March.
5. Change the way you greet your friends and family! Show off your new moves by doing a fist bump or elbow bump. Handshakes and giving lots of smoochy kisses only helps to transfer illnesses.

Some things to think about:

Babies, children, adolescents, and healthy young adults have not become as ill with COVID-19 as older adults, especially those with other chronic diseases such as diabetes, and heart and lung problems. If you smoke, you will be at higher risk of becoming more ill with this virus as the lungs are the most affected by the virus.

The COVID-19 virus does not share the same symptoms as influenza. People with **influenza** frequently have a high fever, chills, all over body ache, sore throat, and a runny and stuffy nose. Those people with **COVID-19** have a low-grade fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Since we are still in influenza season, you want to know how to tell your healthcare provider **OVER THE PHONE** on how you are feeling. Please call your doctor or nurse practitioner about your symptoms and they will give you instructions of what to do. If you start having problems breathing, call the emergency room first to let them know you are coming so they can direct you to how to come into the hospital so the best care can be given to you.

Don't bother with buying masks. Infectious disease doctors and the people who track diseases and how they spread (epidemiologists) are still trying to figure out how COVID-19 spreads. Since this infection is moving around so quickly, health professionals are starting to think masks will not prevent the virus from being transferred to another person. Save your money as some people are trying to take advantage of the situation and increasing prices. There are no medications that are going to cure you if you do come down with the virus. As more information is learned about this virus, suggestions and recommendations from the CDC may change.

The **BEST** thing you can do to stay healthy from any of the viruses that are going around right now (including influenza) is to wash your hands, eat healthy, and stay away from people who might be sick. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me!

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What You Need to Know to Stay Healthy

COVID-19

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