

Question and Answer Guide - COVID-19

Addressed to Quebec's Jewish Community prior to PASSOVER

What is COVID-19?

- COVID-19 is an infection caused by a coronavirus, a VERY contagious virus that affects the airways

How is COVID-19 transmitted?

- Directly from person to person
- By contact with soiled objects
- By having close contact with an infected person when that person coughs or sneezes
- By touching infected surfaces with your hands that then transfer the germs to your mouth, nose or eyes

Can a person without symptoms transmit COVID-19?

- Yes
- A person who does not feel sick can still transmit the disease

When do the symptoms of the disease develop?

- Most often 5 to 7 days after contamination
- Symptoms can start 1.5 to 14 days after contamination
- **14 days** is the **minimal** period of isolation recommended by public health officials after the onset of symptoms

How can the disease be prevented?

- Avoid close contact with any infected person (ex: shaking hands or kissing)
- Stand at least two meters away from others
- Do not share any objects with an infected person. If possible, use a separate bathroom
- Go outside as little as possible, especially to public places, and bring the fewest items possible and the least often back into the home from the outside (groceries, toys, etc.)
- Do not share glasses, plates or utensils
- Avoid hand contact with infected surfaces (counters, handles, etc.) because there is a risk of touching your mouth, nose or eyes with your hands. Wash these surfaces regularly.
- Wash your hands often with running lukewarm water and soap for at least 20 seconds
- Use an alcohol-based disinfectant if you don't have access to soap and water
- When you cough or sneeze:
 - cover your mouth and nose with your arm to reduce the spread of germs
 - if you use a tissue, discard it as soon as possible and wash your hands

What is the most important individual measure to prevent COVID-19?

- Wash your hands **often**
- Teach your children and loved ones to wash their hands. Encourage them to do so often
- Ensure that soap or antiseptic products are easily accessible in all living areas: bathrooms, kitchen and dining area, home entrances, etc.
- Here's a link: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/advice-and-prevention/accidents-injuries-and-diseases-prevention/washing-hands/>

Who can contract COVID-19?

- ANYBODY!

What are the main symptoms of COVID-19?

- Cough
- Fever
- Extreme fatigue
- Breathing difficulties
- There are many other possible symptoms: nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat, sudden loss of smell, loss of taste, diarrhea, vomiting, muscle pain, etc.

Is the disease serious?

- YES
- Symptoms may be mild and resemble those of a common cold or flu
- BUT they can also be more severe:
 - Pneumonia
 - Respiratory failure
 - Death

Who is at risk of developing the more severe disease?

- **ANYONE !**
- Anyone can have a severe form of the disease, but its more common in:
 - People over 70 years of age
 - People with chronic diseases (hypertension, diabetes, lung and heart disease, etc.)
 - People who are immunocompromised

Is there a cure for COVID-19?

- No
- Supportive treatments may be offered to very sick people
- Research teams are actively working on treatments and vaccines
- Drugs are currently being tested

Do the terms 'social distancing' and 'quarantine' have the same meaning?

- NO (see below)

Who should be quarantined?

- Anyone who is infected with COVID-19
- Anyone who is awaiting a COVID-19 test result
- Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 (even with a negative test result)
- Anyone returning from travel within 14 days
- Anyone who has been in contact with a person infected with COVID-19 or who is awaiting a COVID-19 screening test result

What is quarantine? What should you do if you are quarantined?

- A period of at least 14 days in which you CANNOT leave your home

- You must isolate yourself in your home until you have been cleared by public health authorities
- You must avoid contact with family members, even those who live in your home
- If possible, use your own private bathroom
- You cannot go for a walk, you cannot do groceries, etc.
- If leaving the home setting cannot be avoided (e.g. to go to a medical appointment), wear a mask (if not available, cover mouth and nose with tissues) and maintain a 2 meter distance from others
- You must inform the health care facility in advance that you may be infectious

How long does the quarantine last?

- A **minimum** of 14 days **AND** at least 48 hours after all symptoms are resolved
- The quarantine is maintained until your local public health authority declares that you are no longer at risk of transmitting the virus
- It is crucial to strictly adhere to the public health guidelines as the virus could linger in your respiratory system for 1 month after the onset of symptoms

What should I watch for if I'm quarantined?

- It is necessary to take your temperature regularly and monitor yourself for disease symptoms
- Call 1-877-644-4545 if you develop a fever or symptoms

If I am sick but my COVID-19 test is negative, do I still need to isolate myself?

- Yes
- The test could be falsely negative
- As long as you have symptoms of the disease, you are contagious and need to isolate yourself
- If you have any questions, call your doctor or call 1-877-644-4545

What does "social distancing" mean?

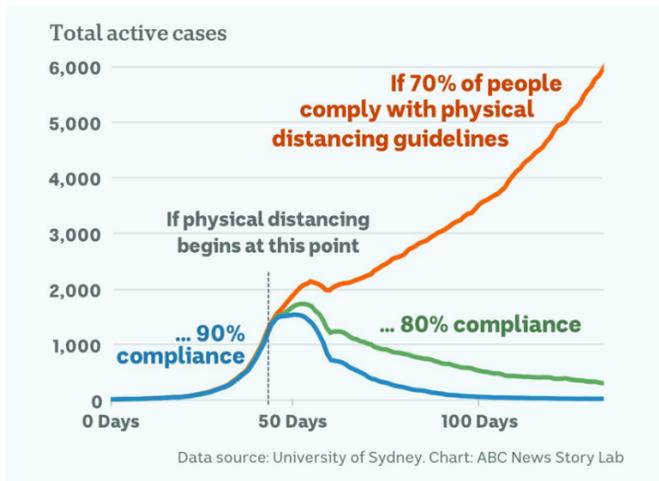
- It's changing your daily habits to minimize close contact with other people
- It's one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of the disease during a pandemic
- It's about maintaining a certain physical distance between yourself and others
- Practicing 'social distancing' includes:
 - Avoiding busy places and ALL gatherings
 - Avoiding usual greetings, such as handshakes
 - Limiting contact with higher-risk individuals such as seniors and people in poor health
 - Maintaining a distance of at least **2 arm lengths** (about 2 meters) from others

Who should practice "social distancing"?

- **EVERYBODY**

Social distancing is painful! It's inhumane and difficult for everyone. Are these measures really going to help this pandemic?

- **YES !**
- Social distancing is our **ONLY** way to contain this pandemic.
- It requires the cooperation of more than 90% of the population to have a beneficial effect
- It is essential that everyone stays at home!



Can I go outside?

- Yes, keeping a distance of at least 2 meters from others
- You can go outside to get some air **ONLY** if you are not sick

Can my kids play outside and if so, with whom?

- Yes, but only with family members living under the same roof
- Ideally in your yard or terrace
- They can only play outside **if they are not sick**

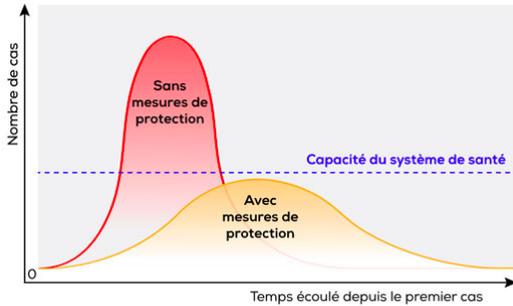
How long is this going to last?

- The duration of the pandemic is unknown at this time
- The faster we **ALL** cooperate with these explained measures, the less time it will take

What does "flatten the curve" mean?

- A rapid and significant increase in cases of coronavirus-infected patients could be devastating for the already overworked health care system.
- In the graph, the red curve shows that the number of cases is well beyond what the health system is able to manage in terms of human resources (caregivers), available beds, materials, equipment, etc.
- This means that our health care system could no longer be able to provide optimal care to infected people in addition to all other sick patients.
- The yellow curve, which is flatter, shows that with the protective measures in place such as social distancing, the number of cases over time becomes more progressive and does not exceed the capacity of the health care system.
- In this way, caring for the sick remains possible.

Aplatir la courbe de la COVID-19



How do I stay in touch with my family and friends?

- Phone
- WhatsApp
- Zoom
- Skype
- Contact older people often to make them feel less alone

What can I do while at home?

- Reading, studying
- Talking on the phone
- Games, board games, card games
- Puzzles
- Artistic activities (painting, coloring, etc.)
- Online shopping
- Practice **remote activities** such as:
 - Playing online games
 - Challah Bakes or other baking
 - Torah classes or prayers
 - Cooking Shabbat and delicious Passover dishes
 - Playing musical instruments together
 - Having tea or meals
 - Playing sports at home
 - Doing Passover cleaning

Can I deliver food to my grandparents?

- Yes, only if you are not sick nor in quarantine
- Wash your hands regularly so you don't contaminate your grandparents with anything that you might have touched along your way
- As your grandparents are likely to be very sick if they contract the disease, it is best to remain at least 2 meters away from them and leave immediately after dropping the food or items off at their door.
- Do not hand them the bags directly. Don't kiss them. Don't hug them.
- Your grandparents must wash their hands as soon as they receive and put away the items that you have delivered to them
- Any bags and boxes touched by others must be disposed of immediately

I'm not feeling well. Can my teenager go out to do my shopping?

- No
- People who live under the same roof as a person who is ill with the Covid-19 or who is waiting for their Covid-19 test result should NOT go out to do errands. These people must remain isolated as well. This includes adolescents who are healthy and who live with their sick parents or brothers. These adolescents have been in contact with the disease, may be asymptomatic or developing the virus. These teenagers are potentially contagious.

I'm not feeling well. How do I get tested?

- Call 1-877-644-4545
- COVID-19 screening centers are numerous and constantly increasing

Can we get together for the Passover seders?

- NO!
- No invitations are allowed
- No gatherings are allowed, no matter the occasion or reason

I finished my quarantine and am feeling better. My parents have been isolated for 14 days. Can we get together for the seders?

- No
- Even if you have completed a quarantine period, a 14-day isolation period or have even recovered from the disease, you must NOT meet for Passover
- Only people who normally live under the same roof can be part of your seder

My relatives are driving in from New York (or anywhere else). They have dual citizenship. Can they still come over for Passover?

- **NO !**
- No guests are allowed at all
- No gatherings are allowed at all
- They must CANCEL their trip
- If your relatives end up in Montreal, they must be quarantined

Can we get together for the second Passover seder?

- NO

Can we get together for the Mimouna?

- NO

Can we get together for Shabbat?

- NO

If a family member is alone, can I invite him / her to Shabbat or the Holidays?

- NO

I'm healthy and so are my parents. We follow all the instructions. Is it really worth ruining the Pessach celebrations?

- Yes
- This is the only way to control this pandemic
- No gatherings are allowed
- You cannot know if you are a carrier of the disease, even without symptoms, or that you will not develop the disease sometime soon. Anybody can be contagious without even knowing it!

I am not sick. I even got tested for COVID-19 and my test result is negative. My family is in the same situation. Can we spend the Pessach Holidays together?

- **NO !!!**
- Absolutely no gatherings allowed
- The test can be falsely reassuring, especially if it was done in the early part of the disease
- There are NO gatherings that can be safe for anyone
- Each and everyone of us must stay home. There is no room for discussion!

I received my seasonal flu shot. Am I protected against COVID-19?

- NO
- No vaccine currently exists to prevent COVID-19

Everyone seems to be saying something different. Who should I listen to?

- Listen to medical experts in Public Health
- The COVID-19 pandemic is their specialty!
- Listen to the hundreds of doctors that are concerned about the future of our Community

I have many questions and am worried. Who can help me?

- Coronavirus Info Line 1-877-644-4545
- Federation CJA Hotline 514-734-1411
- Need help from Federation CJA: <https://www.federationcja.org/en/covid19-coronavirus-resources/get-help/>
- Ometz: helpline@ometz.ca
- Federation CJA Resources: <https://www.federationcja.org/en/covid19-coronavirus-resources/>
- <https://www.quebec.ca/sante/problemes-de-sante/a-z/coronavirus-2019/reponses-questions-coronavirus-covid19/>
- <https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-publique/services/maladies/2019-nouveau-coronavirus/prevention-risques.html#sociale>
- <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/covid-19/outils>

References :

https://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/sante/documents/Problemes_de_sante/19-210-30FA_Guide-autosoins_francais.pdf?1584985897

Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) – MSSS

Coronavirus - Montreal Health: santemontreal.qc.ca/population

<https://www.inspq.qc.ca/covid-19/outils>

DISCLAIMER: data based on current knowledge (March 30th, 2020)

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