



TOWN OF WESTFORD
BOARD OF HEALTH
TOWN HALL
WESTFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01886
(978)692-5509 Fax (978) 399 2558

March 13, 2020

Dear Westford Senior Citizens,

As you are aware, the emergence and spread of COVID-19 virus is unprecedented. Unlike the flu, there is no vaccine, no current treatment or medications available. COVID-19 is highly contagious. Considering the double jeopardy of COVID-19 added to the danger of the typical seasonal flu, the Westford Health Department is providing this guidance document for our senior citizens. You are our most vulnerable population. These recommendations are provided by leading public health organizations such as the CDC and the World Health Organization, the front-line forces for containing and mitigating this virus.

Remember that this situation remains fluid. Our current recommendations include the following common-sense, preventative and social distancing practices:

1. Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds, especially after sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose as well as after you have been in a public place.
2. If soap and water is not available, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
3. Avoid touching your face, especially your mouth nose and eyes.
4. Limit all non- essential gatherings and exposures in public places, including grocery stores, movies, events and senior centers. Avoid crowds and buildings that are poorly ventilated. Take every precaution to keep a 6 foot buffer between yourself and others. If you must go out, stay away from people who are sick.
5. To the extent possible, avoid touching surfaces in public places including door handles, handrails, and door knobs. Use a tissue or sleeve to cover your hand or finger if you must touch something. Cleanse surfaces at home frequently using disinfectants, following specific manufacturer s directions. Do not forget items like cell phones, toilets, faucets and objects you touch frequently.
6. Communicate through phone or email. Do not permit sick family members or visitors into your home.
7. Avoid all non- essential air travel and cancel all cruises.
8. Get a flu and pneumonia shot if you have not received them.
9. Contact your health care provider to request a 3-month supply of needed medication, in case of medication shortages, or an inability to obtain them. Be sure to have all needed over-the-counter medications to treat fevers or other symptoms.

10. Procure sufficient basic supplies and store them at home so you are prepared to stay home for a period of time, but do not hoard. Consider ways to get food and supplies brought to your home by friends or family.
11. Prepare a plan for caring for yourself if you become ill and a back- up plan if your caregiver gets sick.
12. Do NOT go to your MD without calling first.

SOME PEOPLE ARE AT A HIGHER RISK FOR BECOMING VERY SICK FROM THIS ILLNESS.

These include older adults and people who are immunocompromised or who have serious chronic medical conditions such as Heart, Lung Disease, or Diabetes.

Watch for symptoms and emergency warning signs including FEVER, COUGH and SHORTNESS of BREATH. If you believe you are experiencing any of symptoms, call your doctor. Your MD will decide whether to have you come in or treat at home. DO NOT go to a hospital or office without calling first.

The Westford Health Department is committed to providing information as we work with our Town Manager, Senior Center Director and Department Heads to protect the health and safety of our residents. Please feel free to call () if you have any questions about any of these guidelines. You can also go to our website for links to additional resources at <https://westfordma.gov/covid-19> We will continue to send updates as things evolve and additional information is provided to us by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health or our federal partners. Stay calm and thank you for taking responsibility and doing what you can to help contain this virus. Prevention does work and together we can help protect our community.

Be Well!

Jeffrey Stephens R.S. CP-FS
Health Director
Westford Health