

(3-18-2020) Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person, according to the Centers for Disease Control. Seniors are the most vulnerable. Since most people with Parkinson's disease (PD) are in their senior years, the Parkinson's Foundation wants you to be prepared for COVID-19 and Parkinson's.

About the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Coronaviruses are a family of viruses that are like the common cold, severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS). In 2019, a new virus formed and spread from China to other countries, including the U.S. now called coronavirus disease 2019 or COVID-19.

Signs and symptoms of infection with COVID-19 may appear two to 14 days after exposure and can include fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing. There is currently no cure or vaccine. Those who believe they may have the illness should seek medical treatment right away. Read the Centers for Disease Control factsheet [here](#).

Seniors and Coronavirus

Seniors are most at risk to develop COVID-19 and its symptoms, which can lead to the development of pneumonia. Seniors should strongly consider getting the pneumonia vaccine as soon as possible or speaking about it with their doctor.

In general, viruses spread faster in residential facilities, community housing and assisted living centers. When possible, seniors living in these facilities should avoid communal rooms and sanitize often.

Preparedness for People with Parkinson's

People with Parkinson's and care partners should take these tips into consideration to be better prepared for the Coronavirus:

Everyday Precautions

Washing hands. Wash your hands. Wash them often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Carry hand sanitizer. When in public spaces use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Sanitize around you. Stay as healthy as possible and use disinfectant wipes in public areas.

Know the symptoms. Primary symptoms include mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough and/or shortness of breath.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

Stock up on supplies.

Take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others.

When you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick. Limit close contact and wash your hands often.

Avoid crowds as much as possible.

Avoid cruise travel and non-essential air travel.

During a COVID-19 outbreak in your community, stay home as much as possible to reduce your risk of being exposed.

PD Preparedness

Check all your medications. Take inventory of all medications and reorder any that are running low.

Write your medication list down. Write down or print a list of all your medications (not just PD medications). Include medication name, strength, times taken and dosages. This customizable medication schedule can help.

Make a list of your doctors. Make a list of your doctors and their contact information and take it with you in the event of a hospitalization.

Stock your Aware in Care kit in the event you need to educate a health care professional about your PD needs. Order one [here](#).

Have your Medical Alert Card handy. Keep it with you at all times. Print one [here](#).

Know your community response plan. Check in with your state's emergency management agency [here](#).

