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March 17, 2020



Dear Friends,

In these times of uncertainty and concern around the world, the iACT family is with you. We continue to monitor the unfolding global pandemic of Coronavirus (COVID-19/2019-nCoV), and we are especially paying attention to how it might affect our refugee friends and their communities.

From fifteen years of working next to refugees, we are in awe and appreciation of your strength, experience, skills, and leadership. We have been in touch with many of you around the world, and we have heard that you are ready to take on the challenge of protecting your families.

We have collected important information to help you reduce the damage from this virus. Please read the following document carefully and share it widely. You are the experts on how to mobilize your community. Let us know how we can better support you. Also, keep in communication with the organizations already working in your camp or site and collaborate closely.

We are proud to work next to you—in difficult times and in joyful times. These difficult times will pass, and we look forward to continuing to walk with you on a pathway that allows you and your children to thrive.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katie-Jay Scott'.

Katie-Jay Scott  
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gabriel Stauring'.

Gabriel Stauring  
Chief of Vision & Strategy

## Coronavirus (Covid 19/2019-nCoV) facts and precautions

**Please note that new information about coronavirus is being updated daily. iACT will continue to be in contact with your community regarding FACTUAL updates. Please see the “Facts vs. Myths” section.**

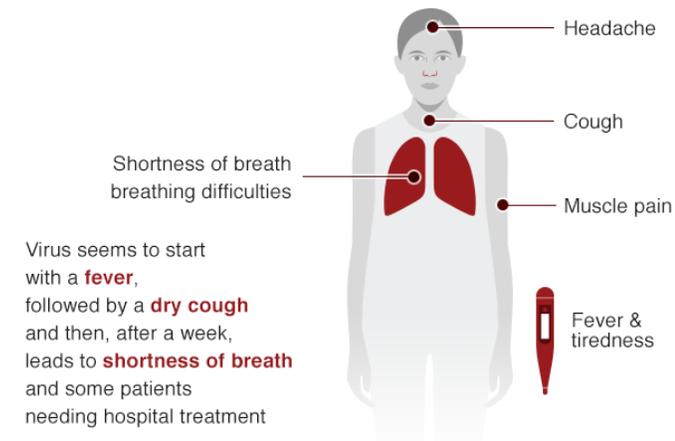
### Symptoms:

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a virus (more specifically, a coronavirus) identified as the cause of an outbreak of respiratory illness first detected in Wuhan, China. Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Muscle pain/soreness

The following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

### Symptoms of coronavirus (Covid-19)



Source: WHO

BBC

Symptoms of reported Coronavirus illnesses have ranged from infected people. Some people have little to no symptoms and others can become severely ill and this can result in death. As this is a new virus, we are still learning about how it affects children. We know it is possible for people of any age to be infected with the virus, but so far there are relatively few cases of Coronavirus reported among children.

Those who are most at risk:

- Adults older than 60
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like:
  - Heart disease
  - Diabetes
  - Lung disease

### Transmission:

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many different species of animals, including camels, cattle, cats, and bats. Rarely, animal coronaviruses can infect people and then spread between people. Early on, many of the patients in the outbreak of respiratory illness caused by Coronavirus in Wuhan, China had some link to a large seafood and live animal market, suggesting animal-to-person spread. However, person-to-person spread is now occurring.

The Coronavirus is a respiratory virus which spreads primarily through droplets generated when an infected person coughs or sneezes, or through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose.

People who are infected may or may not display visible symptoms. If someone is infected with Coronavirus but not displaying symptoms, they can still transmit the virus through droplets. This makes person-to-person transmission common and dangerous.

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## **How to protect yourself, your family, and your community:**

There are currently no vaccines available to protect you against the coronavirus infection. You may be able to reduce your risk of infection by doing the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 40-60 seconds (please see the “Hand Washing Guide” on the last page)
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Cover your cough or sneeze into your arm/elbow
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Practice social distancing:
  - Avoid close contact with people - stay 6 feet (1.8 meters/72 inches/a little over an adult’s height) away from those who are not living in your home (parents, children, siblings, etc.)
  - Avoid crowded areas - anywhere you cannot be at least the above distance away from people
  - Avoid touching people who are not living in your home (handshakes, hugs, etc.)
  - Avoiding sharing food, utensils, cups, towels, etc.
- Stay home when you are sick
- If possible, clean frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Do not spread misinformation (please see the “Facts vs. Myths” section)

If you have a question about whether the information you have receive is factual or a myth, please ask an iACT staff member and we will research the information.

## **Hand Washing Guidelines:**

Remember to wash your hands (SEE “HAND WASHING GUIDE” ON LAST PAGE):

- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After visiting a public space such as public transportation, markets, places of worship, etc.
- After touching surfaces outside of the home
- Before and after eating
- In general, you should always wash your hands at the following times:
  - After using the toilet/latrine
  - Before, during, and after caring for a sick person
  - Before and after eating
  - After handling trash
  - After touching animals
  - After changing babies’ diapers or helping children use the toilets
  - When your hands are visibly dirty

## **Treatment/Care:**

There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for the Coronavirus infection, although vaccines are currently being tested. If you suspect you are sick with Coronavirus:

- Stay home! People who are mildly ill with Coronavirus are able to recover at home. Do not leave, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- Get lots of rest
- Continue washing hands

### **Facts vs. Myths:**

There are MANY myths circulating about Coronavirus through word of mouth and social media. We will address SOME of the myths below, but it is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to not spread misinformation. As stated above, iACT will continue to be in contact with your community about factual updates regarding Coronavirus. If you would like more information, you can visit reputable websites like Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([CDC.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) and World Health Organization ([WHO.int](https://www.who.int)). You can also reach out to iACT staff in your community about questions regarding Coronavirus. US-based iACT staff will be in contact with staff in your community.

- **Myth:** Coronavirus cannot be transmitted in areas with hot and humid climates.  
**Fact:** Coronavirus can be transmitted in ALL AREAS, including areas with hot and humid weather.
- **Myth:** Taking a hot bath can prevent Coronavirus.  
**Fact:** Taking a hot bath will not prevent you from catching Coronavirus. Actually, taking a hot bath with extremely hot water can be harmful, as it can burn you.
- **Myth:** Coronavirus can be transmitted through mosquito bites.  
**Fact:** No, to date there has been no information nor evidence to suggest that Coronavirus could be transmitted by mosquitoes.
- **Myth:** Spraying alcohol, chlorine, or bleach all over your body kill the Coronavirus.  
**Fact:** No. They will not kill viruses that have already entered your body. Spraying such substances can be harmful to clothes or mucous membranes (i.e. eyes, mouth).
- **Myth:** Vaccines against pneumonia protect you against the new coronavirus.  
**Fact:** Vaccines against pneumonia do not provide protection against Coronavirus. The virus is so new and different that it needs its own vaccine and researchers are trying to develop a vaccine.
- **Myth:** Cold weather and snow can kill the new coronavirus.  
**Fact:** No, there is no reason to believe that cold weather can kill the Coronavirus.
- **Myth:** Eating/drinking \_\_\_\_\_ can help prevent Coronavirus.  
**Fact:** There is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating/drinking certain things has protected people against Coronavirus.
- **Myth:** Only adults over 60 can get Coronavirus.  
**Fact:** No, people of ALL AGES can get Coronavirus (Please see “Symptoms” section).
- **Myth:** Antibiotics are effective in preventing and treating Coronavirus.  
**Fact:** No, antibiotics do not work against viruses, only bacteria.
- **Myth:** There are specific medicines to prevent and treat Coronavirus.  
**Fact:** To date, there is no specific medicine recommended to prevent or treat Coronavirus.
- **Myth:** Coronavirus will go away in summer months.  
**Fact:** No, previous pandemics didn’t follow weather patterns plus as the Northern Hemisphere enters summer, winter will begin in the Southern Hemisphere. Virus is global.
- **Myth:** If you can hold your breath for ten seconds without discomfort, you don’t have Coronavirus.  
**Fact:** No, most young patients with Coronavirus will be able to hold their breath for much longer than 10 seconds. Many elderly people without the virus won’t be able to do it.
- **Myth:** Coronavirus lives in the throat. Drink lots of water so the virus is pushed into the stomach where the acid will kill it.  
**Fact:** Coronavirus may gain entry via throat, but it penetrates into the host cells. You can’t wash it away.
- **Myth:** Hand sanitizers are better than soap and water.  
**Fact:** No, soap and water kill and wash away the virus from skin (it can’t penetrate our skin cells). It also cleans visible soil. Hand sanitizer is good to use when soap and water are not available.

**Promote and share this iACT Fact Sheet and do not spread misinformation!**

## **Mindfulness Exercises:**

At this time, iACT encourages communities to continue practicing mindfulness.

What is “mindfulness”? Mindfulness is paying attention, on purpose, in the present moment, without making judgments. Mindfulness is being aware of the present moment rather than being lost in thinking about the past or about the future. Doing mindfulness exercises helps us react and respond better to different kinds of situations. Many mindfulness exercises help us focus on one single action. Mindfulness is for people of all ages, and the exercises here can be done by both children and adults.

### **Exercise 1: Take a Deep Breath**

1. Sit in a comfortable, upright position or lie in a comfortable position on your back.
2. Close your eyes and rest your hands on your belly.
3. When you hear the chime, slowly take a deep breath in and out, concentrating on your hands moving up and down as your belly rises and falls.
4. Slowly take about 5 more deep breaths, again concentrating on your hands going up and down as your belly rises and falls.
5. Now, take 3 normal breaths.
6. When you hear the chime, slowly open your eyes and slowly sit up.
7. Notice how you feel, what you are aware of.

### **Exercise 2: Mindful Walking**

1. Stand upright, arms by your sides, feeling your feet on the ground.
2. Take a few deep, full breaths in and out, feeling the breath moving in and out, settling the body and mind.
3. Begin walking slowly, paying attention to the feet touching the ground, the way the body works together to support the walking, the breath moving in and out.
4. Continue walking for a few minutes, noticing how walking slowly and with awareness feels.
5. Stop walking.
6. Stand upright, feeling your feet on the ground, breath moving in and out, eyes open or closed.
7. Notice the effects of your walking meditation.
8. Let the meditation go and return to your day.

### **Exercise 3: My Mind Feels, My Body Feels**

1. Sit or stand in a comfortable position
2. Name one thing that you're feeling in your mind and one thing that you're feeling in your body. Here's an example, "My body feels relaxed, and my mind feels happy."
3. I'll start, "My body feels stiff, and my mind feels a little nervous."
4. Roll the ball to your partner or to another child in the circle (if you don't have a ball, take turns sharing)
5. Now you name something and roll the ball back. "My foot itches, and I feel silly."
6. Continue the game until everyone has had a chance to share.
7. Pause and take a few breaths together.

#### **Resources:**

- UNICEF (<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/everything-you-need-know-about-washing-your-hands-protect-against-coronavirus-covid-19>)
  - CDC (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>)
  - WHO (<https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>)
  - Based on document from Grandcare Home Health Services; edited by Alexandra Nuttall-Smith, PT, MPT, ATC, iACT Director of Health and Wellness
- Faheem Younus, MD ([twitter.com/FaheemYounus](https://twitter.com/FaheemYounus))

# Hand washing technique with soap and water



1 Wet hands with water



2 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces



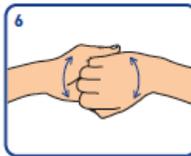
3 Rub hands palm to palm



4 Rub back of each hand with palm of other hand with fingers interlaced



5 Rub palm to palm with fingers interlaced



6 Rub with back of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



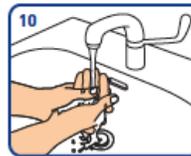
7 Rub each thumb clasped in opposite hand using a rotational movement



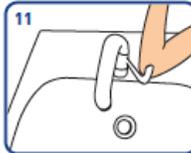
8 Rub tips of fingers in opposite palm in a circular motion



9 Rub each wrist with opposite hand



10 Rinse hands with water



11 Use elbow to turn off tap (if no elbow tap available use paper towel to turn off tap)



12 Dry thoroughly with a single-use towel



13 Hand washing should take 40-60 seconds

Issued by  [www.debgroup.com](http://www.debgroup.com)



World Health Organization

Adapted from World Health Organization Guidelines on Hand Hygiene in Health Care 2009

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