The 2019 Coronavirus and People with HIV

There is widespread community transmission of COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019) happening in New York City. COVID-19 is a respiratory illness (which affects breathing) caused by a new coronavirus.

- Commonly reported symptoms include:
  - Fever (temperature over 100.4 degrees F or 38 degrees C)
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath (difficulty breathing)
  - Sore throat
- If you have any of these symptoms, and they are not due to a preexisting health condition like asthma or emphysema, you may have COVID-19 and you must stay home.
- Most people with COVID-19 will not need medical attention for their symptoms.
- People who are at most risk for severe illness are people who are over 50 years old, have disabilities, or who have other health conditions, including chronic lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, cancer or a weakened immune system.

**Guidance for People With HIV**

Most people with HIV do not need to take additional precautions for COVID-19. There is no evidence that having HIV puts you at greater risk of severe illness.

People with HIV should take these steps to protect themselves.

- **Take HIV and other medicines as prescribed.**
  - This will help keep your immune system strong, your CD4 count high and your viral load undetectable.
- **Maintain a supply of all your medicines.**
  - Do not wait until you are running low. Ask your HIV care provider or pharmacy for an additional month’s supply of medicines.
  - If you have trouble getting medicines, call the New York State Uninsured Care Programs at 800-542-2437.
- **Have a way to contact your HIV clinic.**
  - We may all have to stay home for the next few weeks. Use the clinic’s online portal, or make sure you can contact your providers by phone or text.
- **Get recommended vaccinations for flu and pneumonia.**
  - These vaccines prevent respiratory illness that could be confused with COVID-19 and help prevent getting two serious respiratory illnesses at once.
**Additional Guidance**

- Avoid all unnecessary events, travel or interactions. Stay at home as much as you can.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when sneezing or coughing. Do not use your hands.
- Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- Do not shake hands. Instead, wave or elbow bump.
- Monitor your health more closely than usual for cold or flu symptoms.
- Create more personal space between yourself and others. This is called social distancing.
- **If you have mild to moderate symptoms, stay home. You should not seek medical care or try to get tested.** By staying home, you reduce the possibility of transmission to others, including health care workers who are needed to care for the more seriously ill.
- If you are over 50 years old, have a disability or have other chronic health conditions, consult your doctor. They may want to monitor you more closely.

**More Information and Support**

- If you receive Ryan White services and need help getting food or shelter, call 311 to connect with agencies that can assist you.
- If you are feeling anxious, stressed or overwhelmed, connect with trained counselors at NYC Well, the City’s confidential help line. Call 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355), text "WELL" to 65173, or chat online at nyc.gov/nycwell. Text and chat services are also available in Spanish and Simplified Chinese.
- For real-time updates, text “COVID” to 692-692. For updates in Spanish, text “COVIDESP” to 692-692. Messages and data rates may apply.
- If you need a provider, NYC Health and Hospitals provides care to all New Yorkers, regardless of immigration status, insurance status or ability to pay. Call 844-NYC-4NYC (844-692-4692) or 311.
- Visit nyc.gov/coronavirus for additional resources and information.

The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves. 3.19.20