AKDN SPECIAL BULLETIN: COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new virus that spreads through drops of saliva from the mouth or droplets from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes. COVID-19 is not “just” the flu. It is much more contagious and can spread rapidly through our communities.

**Symptoms:**
- Common: Fever, cough, difficulty breathing
- Severe: Persistent pain and pressure in the chest, trouble breathing, mental confusion, bluish lips or face, etc.

**High Risk Groups:**
- People 70+ years of age
- Pregnant women
- People living with underlying health problems like heart disease, diabetes, asthma and cancer

Prevention is the only way to limit the spread of COVID-19. Follow the recommendations below to protect yourself, your family & your community.

1. **STAY AT HOME**
   - Only leave your home to buy essentials like groceries or household items
   - Avoid using public transportation, taxis or ride share services
   - If you cannot avoid public transportation, maintain a safe distance from other travelers and avoid touching surfaces
   - Your government may have further restrictions to help curb the spread of the virus -- follow these rules to help reduce your risk of being infected

2. **WASH YOUR HANDS**
   - Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds as often as you can
   - Make sure you wash the front and back of your hands, and between your fingers
   - When you are done, dry your hands either with a clean towel or naturally
   - Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands

3. **AVOID CONTACT WITH OTHERS**
   - Do not go to work, school or other places that may have large crowds, like community gathering areas, public celebrations and prayer halls
   - Do not make physical contact with others through handshakes and hugs
   - Do not have visitors in your home unless it is necessary (for example, visit from health worker)
   - Avoid contact with the elderly and other people who may be at higher risk of getting sick
   - Keep grandchildren away from grandparents (it is important to keep children away from the elderly and the vulnerable)
   - Make sure that shared spaces in your home have good airflow: open windows where you can
   - If avoiding contact with people is not possible, keep a distance of at least 1 meter from other people at all times

4. **COUGH OR SNEEZE INTO A TISSUE OR YOUR ELBOW**
   - Do not cough into your hand
   - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze; throw the tissue out in a covered wastebasket and follow by washing your hands

5. **SELF-ISOLATE IF YOU FEEL SICK**
   - If you are sick or experience any of the symptoms mentioned above, isolate yourself for 14 days starting on the day you start to feel sick
   - At home, try to isolate yourself from family by staying in a different part of the house; in shared spaces, keep a distance of at least 1 meter from your family
   - You can stop self-isolating after 14 days if you no longer have a fever and your other symptoms have improved
   - Continue to keep your distance from people after you self-isolate
   - If you are still sick after 14 days, contact your doctor or local health clinic for advice (do not walk into a clinic unless asked)

Source: WHO, CDC, AGA KHAN HEALTH SERVICES, AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY

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