



Nutrition News

Your Nutrition and COVID19/Coronavirus

Dear Friends,

By now you must be aware of the worldwide spread of the COVID19 virus, also known as coronavirus. One of the many ways this virus differs from other common viruses like those that cause seasonal Influenza is that there's no vaccine currently available, although researchers are working quickly to make one available.

The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person, among people who are in close contact with one another - within six feet.

Before we get to the precautions you should take to handle your food safely, here are some general tips:

- Stay home as much as possible.
- Make sure you have access to several weeks of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home for prolonged periods of time.
- Plan now for what you will do if you, or people you rely on for support, become ill.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially

after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, or having been in a public place. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

- Whenever possible, avoid touching surfaces in public places that many other people touch – like elevator buttons and door handles
- Avoid shaking hands with people, hugging, etc. A wave, peace sign or thumbs-up will have to do as a greeting for now.
- If you must touch a surface in public places, use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your hand or finger.
- Wash your hands after touching surfaces in public places.
- Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.
- Clean and disinfect your home to remove germs: practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces like tables, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks and cell phones.
- Avoid crowds, especially in poorly ventilated spaces. Your risk of exposure to respiratory viruses like COVID-19 may increase in crowded, closed-in settings with little air circulation if there are people in the crowd who are sick.
- Avoid all non-essential travel.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

More essential information on the next page.

Dutchess County Office for the Aging • 114 Delafield St., Poughkeepsie NY 12601
(845) 486-2555 • toll free (866) 486-2555 • www.dutchessny.gov/aging

Food Safety and Your OFA Home Delivered Meals

All OFA staff and volunteers have been instructed to wear gloves at all times, and sanitize all surfaces regularly. Drivers and delivery staff cannot enter your home. If you need additional accommodations, call the OFA office at (845) 486-2555.

If you are a client of our Home Delivered Meals (HDM) program, there are some extra steps you should take to prepare for the delivery of your meals:

- Seniors should have a small table or a chair outside their door. When our driver or volunteer brings your meal, that's where they will leave the food.
- For your safety, drivers and volunteers have been advised not to enter your house or apartment.
- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- Have your plate ready before you pick up your food from outside.
- Do not touch anything else outside when picking up the food.
- Once you're back inside, empty the contents of your meal container onto your plate, then discard the container.
- Again, wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use the sanitizer as instructed above.
- Some meals are delivered hot; others are delivered frozen. Heat the food to 160°F/71°C, if the food is not hot enough to eat.
- If you are sick, wear a facemask when you are around other people, especially when sharing a room or vehicle. If you are not sick, you do not need to wear a facemask - unless you are caring for someone who is sick.

In addition to this edition of the Nutrition News, clients of our HDM program will also receive weekly print editions of our *Aging News* newsletter, for the duration of the crisis.

For now, we don't know how long the crisis will last - but the Office for the Aging is doing everything in its power to help all seniors, especially the homebound whose mental and physical health depend on continued social and informational connections.

Any additional questions about local aspects of the COVID-19 crisis can be directed to Dutchess County's new "Dutchess Responds" community. Contact them at **(845) 486-3555**, or by clicking on "Dutchess Responds" at www.dutchessny.gov.

Sincerely,



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NUTRITION NEWS is a monthly publication of the Dutchess County Office for the Aging. The information was prepared by a Registered Dietitian. The Dutchess County Office for the Aging is funded under Title III of the U.S. Older Americans Act, the New York State Office for the Aging, and the county of Dutchess.