

## Preparing for the Potential Spread of COVID-19

With several countries reporting that COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) is spreading within the general population, it makes sense to become prepared in case there is an outbreak of COVID-19 in Ontario.

Local residents are encouraged to take steps to ensure they are prepared to stay in their home for two weeks, in the event they, or someone in their home, becomes ill with COVID-19. If an individual is asked to self-isolate to prevent the spread of COVID-19, they will be expected to stay in their home and limit contact with others.

### Ensure you are prepared:

- **Be prepared to stay in your home for two weeks, in case you become ill**
  - Stock up on non-perishable foods gradually over the next few weeks
  - Be sure you have access to adequate water – one gallon per person, per day
  - Check out the [HPEPH's emergency preparedness page](#) to learn how to prepare an emergency kit
- **Fill prescriptions and stock up over-the-counter medications**
  - Don't wait to fill prescriptions, and fill for an extra month if you're able
  - Get refills with enough notice so that you do not run out of medication
  - Purchase over-the-counter pain/fever medications
- **Stock up on cleaning supplies and hygiene essentials**

### Develop a contingency plan:

- **Make plans for your children or other dependents in case you become sick.**
  - Arrange back up care for your children
  - Stock up on supplies for your pets
  - Have plans in place to accommodate for up to two (2) weeks in isolation at home

- **Make preparations within your workplace**
  - Create back up plans in the event of prolonged staff absences
  - Reinforce infection control procedures, and stay home when sick

## **Know the risks – access up-to-date information:**

- **Get your information from reputable sources**
  - The Ontario Ministry of Health, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and Hastings Prince Edward Public Health all have web pages dedicated to providing current, accurate information

## **Maintain infection control procedures:**

- **If you feel sick, stay home from work**
  - Stay home when you are sick and avoid contact with other people until your symptoms are gone
  - If you suspect you are sick, avoid visiting people in long term care, or individuals with health concerns
- **Limit the spread of germs and take care of yourself**
  - Wash your hands frequently using soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
  - Cough and sneeze into the bend of your arm, not into your hands
  - If you use a tissue, throw it away immediately and wash your hands
  - Avoid touching your nose, mouth or eyes with your hands
  - Avoid shaking hands with others, use other forms of acknowledgement
  - Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces that a lot of people touch (door handles, phones, light switches, desks), and wash your hands after touching these surfaces
  - Avoid sharing items with others such as utensils, cups, water bottles, food
  - Get plenty of rest, eat healthy, and stay physically active to keep your immune system strong
  - Get your influenza vaccine to help avoid getting the flu

### **Other questions?**

Call HPEPH at 613-966-5500 | Toll Free 1-800-267-2803 | TTY: Dial 711 | [hpePublicHealth.ca](http://hpePublicHealth.ca)