



HANDBOOK FOR EMPLOYEES AND FAMILY

Coping with Covid-19 when it hits the Household



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Lesson # 1

Introduction

There's a lot of information available online on dealing with Covid-19 if you are a patient infected with the disease.

Unfortunately, the reality is that today Covid-19 is infecting entire households and not just individuals. When the infected family, comprises members across different generations, living in the same house, then dealing with the disease is extremely stressful.

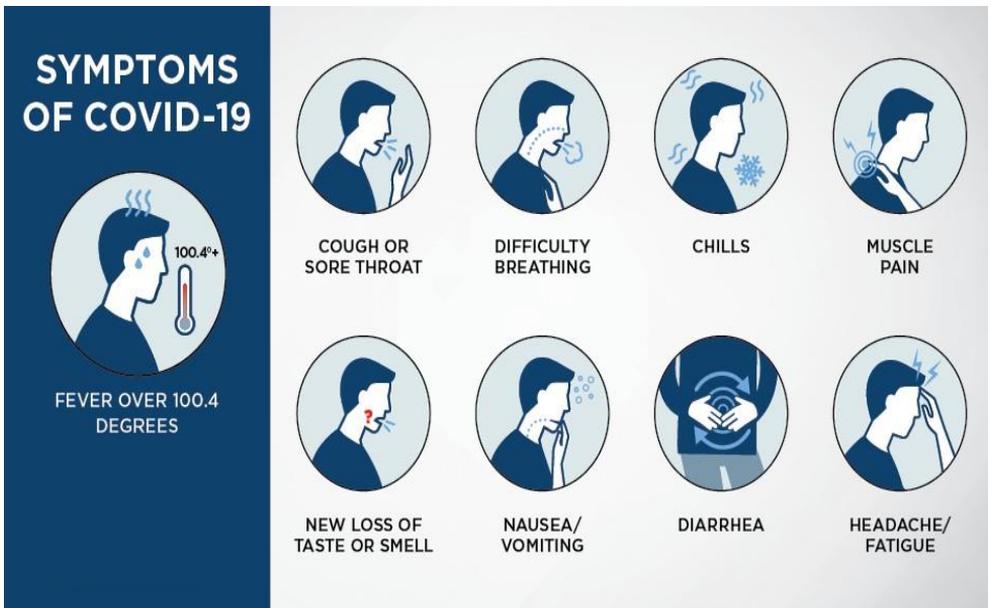
This handbook attempts to help employees and their family members in case Covid-19 grips the household.



Lesson # 2

This virus is unpredictable.....

The same virus affects members of a household in completely different ways. The symptoms could be varying degrees of fever, dry cough, fatigue, sore throat, headache and body ache, loss of taste or smell, nausea and appetite loss, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, difficulty in breathing or shortness of breath.



Severity varies - Mild to moderate to severe. In some cases the symptoms could be 'Blink-n-miss' and in some it could be severe like shortness of breath and drop in oxygen level.

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Lesson # 3

Buy time to rotate care responsibilities

Within households it is very difficult to prevent members from infecting one another, and it is almost inevitable that people will fall sick in succession.



Families struggle to buy time and arrange for caregiving. When some members fall sick and others begin to get better, caregiving responsibilities can be passed on to those doing well or feeling better. Hence, proper planning of caregiving responsibilities is a must.



Family meetings can be held maintaining all protocols (if required video conferencing can be done with those in isolation) in order to check on each member and make sure that everybody – from the youngest to the oldest – know their roles and tasks. This would help everyone feel comfortable and recover at the earliest.

Lesson # 3 cont...

Buy time to rotate care responsibilities

Strategy 1 – Isolate and quarantine

- ❑ Houses with enough space can be divided into three categories – isolation room for those with symptoms, quarantine for those recovering but symptom-free and separating those without symptoms (as yet) in different spaces. However, members with severe symptoms may be hospitalized on advice of the doctor.
- ❑ Sanitising and moving members to appropriate rooms on time helps to pace out the illness of different members and perhaps also reduces the intensity of infection for some.



Strategy 2 – Immunity build-up

To boost general immunity and delay the onset of the illness on healthy members, tips advised by Ministry of Ayush may be followed and also the Dos and Don'ts stated in the Employee Handbook. For eg. eat simple and healthy food rich in

Vitamin C, soak up sunlight for Vitamin D, exercise, do yoga etc.

Lesson # 4

Boost your immunity



COVID-19 Crisis



Ministry of AYUSH recommendations, based on Ayurvedic literature and scientific publications, for preventive health measures and boosting immunity with special reference to respiratory health.

Measures for Enhancing Immunity

- Drink warm water throughout the day.
- Daily practice of Yogasana, Pranayama and Meditation for at least 30 minutes.
- Spices like Haldi (Turmeric), Jeera (Cumin), Dhaniya (Coriander) and Lahsun (Garlic) recommended in cooking.

Ayurvedic Immunity Enhancing Tips

- Take Chyavanprash 10gm (1tsf) in the morning. Diabetics should take sugar free Chyavanprash.
- Drink Herbal Tea/Decoction (Kadha) made from Tulsi (Basil), Dalchini (Cinnamon), Kalimirch (Black Pepper), Shunthi (Dry Ginger) and Munakka (Raisin) - once or twice a day. Add jaggery (Natural Sugar) and/or fresh Lemon Juice to your taste, if needed.
- Golden Milk- half tea spoon Haldi (Turmeric) powder in 150 ml Hot Milk - once or twice a day.

Immunity Boosting Measures for Self-Care

Simple Ayurvedic Procedures

- **Nasal Application**– Apply Sesame Oil/Coconut oil or Ghee in both the nostrils (Pratimarsh Nasya) in morning and evening.
- **Oil Pulling Therapy**– Take 1 table spoon Sesame or Coconut Oil in mouth. Do not drink, swish in the mouth for 2 to 3 minutes and spit it off followed by warm water rinse. This can be done once or twice a day.

Actions During Dry Cough/Sore Throat

- Steam inhalation with fresh Pudina (Mint) leaves or Ajwain (Caraway Seeds) can be practiced once in a day.
- Lavang (Clove) powder mixed with Natural Sugar/Honey can be taken 2-3 times a day in case of cough or throat irritation.
- These measures generally treat normal dry cough and sore throat. However, it is best to consult doctors if these symptoms persist.

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Lesson # 5

Support of a doctor friend is critical

- ❑ Consult the family doctor periodically over video call / phone call for monitoring the patients and strictly follow the doctor's advice!
- ❑ Even before you fall sick, it is critical to identify and enlist the support of a doctor – someone within the family or a family doctor or a doctor friend.
- ❑ The doctor must be knowledgeable on Covid-19 (or be willing to read up or consult others on it), be rational, calm and yet cautious enough to help you take decisions on time.
- ❑ A WhatsApp group can be created and video consultations can be done with the doctor regularly – to take decisions regarding home management protocols, medicines, handling emergencies, hospitalisation etc.



Lesson # 6

On testing for COVID-19



In case of a large family residing in different floors of the same house, all the family members need not get tested. It is a must for those with symptoms to get tested. Those in very close contact with the infected must also get tested. Please follow testing protocols as advised by the doctor



The family may assume Covid-19 for anyone in their household with symptoms and just deal with the symptoms as and when it comes – being especially cautious about the elderly.



Two weeks after the first symptom, all the family members may get the antibody test done to see if they have developed Covid-19 antibodies and are safe; also if some of the members could donate plasma for others.

Lesson # 7

Important Equipment for home management of COVID-19



Hot water – For salt water gargling, for drinking and helping take care of cough and sore throat



Vapour inhaler – For 4-5 times inhalation a day to help clear the lungs



Masks – Everyone must wear masks when near each other but N95 masks when entering room of symptomatic patients



Pulse oximeter – Critical to check oxygen level and pulse; hospitalization to be considered when O2 level starts falling to less than 90. Keep a stock of spare batteries as these oximeters run out of power very fast



Thermometer – To keep an eye on the fever and decide when medication is required



B.P Machine – Useful to have around to help take decision about need for hospitalisation

Lesson # 8

Medicines

Betadine Gargle – Gargle 3-4 times a day. This helps control the viral load, sore throat and also helps some to get back their sense of taste and smell.

Paracetamol – Take the medicine sparingly when fever crosses 102/103 F else, let the body fight the virus naturally.



Other Medicines – For those who need; the doctor may prescribe azithromycin or any other antibiotic after a week of symptoms. Alternative medicines (homeopathic, ayurvedic) may also be kept handy.

Vicks Vaporub – It helps in clearing blocked noses and breath easily. A hot water bottle / electric heating pad kept under the chest while lying face down helps in reducing chest pain.

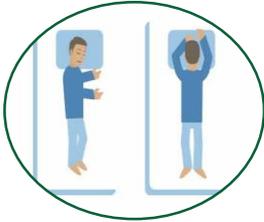
Lesson # 9

Tips to increase your blood oxygen level



Practice taking deep breaths -

Performing deep-breathing exercises help to increase blood oxygen levels as well as relaxes your mind.



Sleep on your side or on your stomach -

When sleeping, lie on stomach and on your sides. This helps keep the lungs clear. Avoid sleeping on your back.



Decrease and manage your stress -

We live in a stressful world, however, there are many strategies for stress management: exercise, meditation, coaching, yoga, and even mindfulness apps.



Eat green vegetables and iron rich food -

Raw and fresh green vegetables and foods rich in iron such as fish, legumes and meat improves iron deficiency and in turn increases the level of oxygen in your blood.

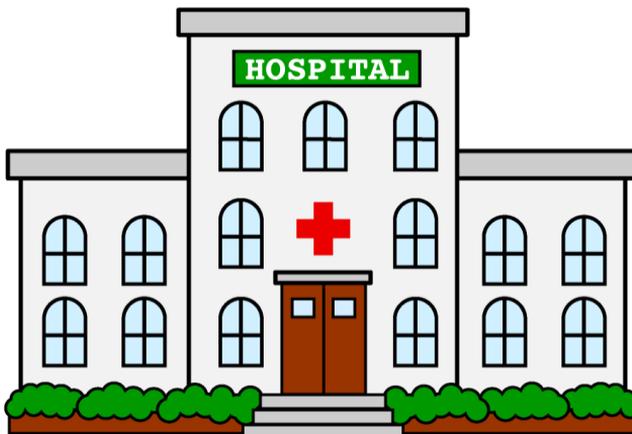
Lesson # 10

Hospitalisation

Getting a hospital bed in an emergency can be the biggest nightmare and so, prepare for it. Do your research on possible hospitals, get in touch with friends who could help, get lists of plasma donors etc.

Some tips

- The best hospitals for Covid-19 may not be the most famous and expensive ones. Do your research and shortlist based on treatment protocols, price, bed availability, insurance cover etc.
- Even if you can afford it, try not to opt for private single room in the hospital. Your loved ones will be kept in isolation and you will not be allowed to even see them. So, having people around helps deal with the loneliness, fear, isolation and it can be supportive and therapeutic. Also, it is a good idea to pack a few photographs of family and friends if someone is being hospitalised.
- Check your insurance cover.



Lesson # 11

Keeping up your Nutrition

To fight any illness, one needs strength, a challenge in most illnesses as one loses appetite. However, when infected with Covid-19, with loss of smell and taste accompanied many a times with nausea, it becomes a huge challenge to make sure the patient is eating properly. With many members ill and with remaining members worrying and caring for those who are ill, or in isolation and quarantine themselves, cooking is a challenge.



- To focus on healing and reducing the burden of cooking, simple and nutritious food can be arranged from any caterer in the neighbourhood.
- Friends and the extended family can also pitch in with supplying simple and healthy food.
- Fruits and juices helps to keep patients hydrated through fevers.
- Load up on vitamins needed to fight the virus.

Lesson # 12

Keep your sanity and spirit

The physical distance and isolation that Covid-19 forces on the family is emotionally the toughest. You cannot even physically comfort a loved one who is suffering.



- Video chatting with friends and extended family
- Talking about our fears and discussing it openly – especially with kids.
- Involving everyone in the healing, including giving responsibilities to the kids – for eg. reminders for medicines, checking temperature, checking O2 levels etc.
- Creating occasions to laugh and be joyful – e.g. a treat, watching a movie together while maintaining physical distance etc.
- De-stressing individually - meditation, prayers, music, playing online board games with friends etc.



Stay safe, healthy and happy!