



## **How to Stay Safe in the New Normal**

### **by Brenda Dale (August 2020)**

The Coronavirus has changed our world in so many ways, and it is not likely that it will go away anytime soon. So you may wonder - how can I keep myself and my family safe in this new state of 'normal', especially as our kids return to school and some of us return to the workplace. I believe we each have a responsibility to create a new normal that keeps us all safe. Here are a few simple things that you can do to keep you and your family, co-workers and contacts safe.

#### **1. Wash Your Hands**

Washing your hands consistently for 20 seconds (i.e. the time it takes you to sing Happy Birthday) is probably the single most important thing you can do to prevent getting ill. Hand washing has been proven to kill germs and viruses, and also prevents the spread of them as well.

#### **2. Wear a Mask**

Wearing a mask can look and feel uncomfortable. However, wearing a mask can help to keep you safe, and can also protect others from getting sick if you are sick. As we move forward, wearing a mask when you are in a public space, particularly an indoor public space, is both respectful and responsible. Making this a habit is vitally important to our continued health, and our progress in keeping our airport and economy open.

#### **3. Practice Social Distancing**

Giving those around you more personal space, is both respectful and helpful in keeping you both safe. Social distancing has been proven to be effective in preventing the spread of germs and viruses. We must be mindful and make it a habit to give others 3-6 feet of space whenever we are in public spaces (e.g. shops, churches, public transportation, offices etc.).

Social distancing isn't required when we are within our family or co-worker bubbles, but whenever we move into public spaces and interact with others



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outside our bubble, it is wise to maintain a distance of 6 feet to keep ourselves and others safe.

#### **4. Virtual Hugs and Bumps**

The lockdowns and self-isolating restrictions of this pandemic have really highlighted that we are social beings! Our common practices of welcoming handshakes and giving hugs have definitely been curtailed. Outside of our personal bubbles, we must rethink how we greet others and become more comfortable with a virtual hug, an elbow bump, a wave, a bow of our head, or even just a friendlier verbal greeting.

#### **5. When Sick, Stay Home**

We have all felt the pressure of missing school, work, or events when we have been sick. However, we must think differently about this as we move forward through this pandemic. We have to encourage and support each other to stay home if we are sick, and use technology, which has proven its value and utility during the pandemic, to support this. We must accept that it is our personal responsibility to ourselves and others to stay home when we are sick.

#### **6. Work from Home**

The pandemic has successfully shown us that working from home is possible. There are definitely pros and cons, however, working remotely will likely be the new normal for many people whose business or service does not require face-to-face interaction. If your job enables you to do more work from home and less work in the office, consider the opportunity, as it can assist you and your family in staying healthy.

These 6 small changes aren't hard; they just require our willingness and commitment to practice them and make them habits! Let's all do our part to stay safe as we navigate through this new 'normal'!