

## What is the latest advice from the Vermont Department of Health?

Vermont is now experiencing community spread of COVID-19, which is why everyone is encouraged to stay home as much as possible. Leave for essentials only and keep a safe distance from others to help slow the spread of the virus and protect our vulnerable populations.

Vermont's Health Commissioner Mark Levine, MD, recommended that all Vermonters cover our faces with some kind of a cloth mask if we have to leave home. COVID-19 can spread *before* a person has any symptoms or even realizes that they are sick! A face mask will help stop the spread of the disease in the event that we're infected without realizing it. Face masks are IN ADDITION to social distancing. Social distancing is still the most effective tool we have to stem the spread of the disease.

The face mask you will need to wear while picking up groceries or walking your dog doesn't need to be medical grade - those masks are reserved for first responders and healthcare professionals. There are plenty of YouTube videos that provide step by step instructions on how to sew one up and even one with no sewing needed.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8OyV15ua24>,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BnhePGv0gmQ>

### The Department of Health wants Vermonters to know:

- If you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath) **CALL** your healthcare provider. Many people who are mildly ill can manage their symptoms at home with rest, drinking fluids, and taking fever reducing medicine, when needed.
- Use the NEW [CDC Self Checker Tool](#) to help you make decisions about seeking appropriate medical care.
- The Food and Drug Administration has not approved any drugs specifically for the treatment of patients with COVID-19.
- Not everybody needs to be tested. Do not call the Health Department. Do not go to the hospital, except in a life-threatening situation.
- Testing is currently limited and is prioritized to healthcare workers, hospitalized patients, and those in long term care facilities.
- Drive-up testing is available at DHMC if you are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. You need an appointment and a referral from your primary care provider.
- If you need to go food shopping, to the pharmacy or do other essential activities, keep a distance of 6 feet between yourself and others. Six feet is about the length of a 3-person

couch or a bed. (Note: Woodstock Pharmacy requests you call to place an order or fulfill a prescription ahead of time. The store is closed but curbside pickup is available.)

- It's OK to get fresh air, exercise outside and walk your dog - as long as you keep 6 feet away from other people.
- Connect with family, friends and your community in responsible ways such as using technology, going outside, learning a new skill, playing games or helping others in need. We encourage social distancing, not social isolation!
- **If you are or someone you know is in crisis.** Feeling anxious, confused, overwhelmed or powerless is common during an infectious disease outbreak. If you or someone you know needs emotional support, call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-8255. Trained helpers are available 24/7. Or text VT to 741741 to talk to someone at the [Crisis Text Line](#). For more information visit [healthvermont.gov/su](http://healthvermont.gov/su)