

INTRODUCTION: COMMUNICABLE VS. NON-COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

A non-infectious, non-communicable disease is a disease that cannot be spread from one person to another. Examples of non-communicable diseases include high blood pressure, diabetes, and cancer. Non-communicable diseases can be caused by genetics or lifestyle factors. *An infectious, or communicable, disease is one that can be passed from person to person and is caused by germs like bacteria and viruses.* Depending on the disease, it may spread through bodily fluid such as blood or saliva, through droplets in the air from coughing, and sneezing, or through breathing in tiny particles in the air.

NICA HAS PUT TOGETHER THESE GUIDELINES TO HELP THE IMMUNOCOMPROMISED COMMUNITY PROTECT THEMSELVES AGAINST *COMMUNICABLE, INFECTIOUS DISEASES.*

WASH YOUR *hands*

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends washing your hands with soap and warm water, scrubbing for at least 20 seconds. Washing your hands before and after you prepare food, after you use the restroom, after you visit public spaces, and after you sneeze or cough can help prevent you from spreading germs to surfaces you touch.

DRINK PLENTY OF LIQUIDS *such as water, juice, and tea*

Hydration is an essential component to a healthy immune system. Water helps your body transport oxygen, removes toxins, and performs many other essential functions that keep your body and its immune system running in optimal shape.

EAT A HEALTHY *and balanced* DIET

Food provides your body with the vitamins and minerals it needs to keep you healthy. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins provide you with healthy fuel to keep your body functioning. Your healthcare provider may prescribe you supplements to meet your nutritional needs.

HANDLE AND PREPARE FOOD *appropriately*

Wash your hands after handling and preparing raw meat. Make sure that meat is cooked to the appropriate temperature as infectious disease agents can live in the meat. Wash and rinse all produce prior to consumption.

COUGH AND SNEEZE *into a tissue or a sleeve*

Covering your mouth when you cough or sneeze can catch air droplets that might be contaminated with an infectious disease. Wash your hands as soon as possible after a coughing or sneezing.

STAY HOME *when you are sick*

If you are feeling ill or have any symptoms of illness such as fever, cough, runny nose, chills, aches, or anything out of the ordinary, consider staying home from work and social engagements to lessen your chance of passing on an infectious disease.

CALL YOUR PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER

*before going to
the emergency
room*

In order to not overwhelm our healthcare system during seasons of high levels of diseases, like the COVID-19 pandemic, contact your PCP or telehealth provider to determine if your symptoms warrant a visit to the doctor's office, urgent care, or the hospital emergency department. If you are experiencing warning signs (such as shortness of breath, persistent chest pain or pressure, confusion or lethargy, etc.) seek emergency medical services immediately.

STAY active

Just like a healthy diet, regular exercise can contribute positively to your overall health. Your exercise routine does not have to be strenuous - a simple walk around the block, yoga, or stretching in the morning can be beneficial to your well-being.

GET adequate SLEEP

Cytokines, proteins that target inflammation and infection response, are both made and released during your sleep cycle. A consistent shortage of sleep can have negative effects on your immune system. Discuss the appropriate amount of sleep for you with your healthcare provider.

MANAGE stress

There is a link between high levels of stress and a weakened immune system. Breathing techniques, quiet time, and yoga are great ways to relieve stress.

**THIS LIST IS NOT EXHAUSTIVE AND IS MEANT TO BE USED AS A *GUIDE*.
YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER MAY PRESCRIBE OR RECOMMEND ADDITIONAL REMEDIES TO *BOOST IMMUNITY*.**

*Consult with your provider before changing your treatment plan, adding supplements to your diet,
or discontinuing your medication.*

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS, ALWAYS CONSULT A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL.

During certain situations, like the **Coronavirus (COVID-19)** in early 2020, you may be required to take more extreme measure to make sure you stay healthy. Precautions such as social distancing, self-quarantining, and isolation may provide you with added protections from a particularly infectious disease.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Social distancing reduces your chance of interacting with others, which reduces the ability for a disease to spread. This can start with people maintaining a 6 foot distance from each other and can progress to "sheltering in place" where a community stays in their homes and severely limits human interaction.

QUARANTINE

Quarantine separates those who have been exposed to a disease to see if they become sick. This prevents people from spreading the disease before they show symptoms. Quarantines can last from a few days to a few months and require the exposed individuals to avoid public contact for that entire period of time.

ISOLATION

Isolation is the act of separating those who are sick from those who are not. This can last as long as the sick person is contagious.

It is important to care for yourself during measures like those mentioned above. Setting a daily routine, reading, practicing hobbies, and enjoying at-home entertainment and exercise can be uplifting ways to pass the time. Reach out to loved ones via phone calls, Skype, emails, and text messages. These measures may seem drastic, but your health is worth it!