

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 3/18/20**



**United Way Fox Cities**

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**United Way's 2-1-1 Key Resource  
for Non-Medical COVID-19 Information**

**March 18, 2020—Northeast Wisconsin:** As the Coronavirus (COVID-19) begins to affect our local communities, the public is looking for answers. Health systems and public health are being inundated with calls. To provide some relief and direct calls to the most appropriate resource, **United Way's 2-1-1 service is now accepting calls for questions related to the COVID-19 crisis that are non-medical in nature.** These calls might pertain to such needs as:

- Food delivery programs for home-bound seniors
- Transportation options, as some public transit services close down
- Nutrition programs for children who rely on free and reduced meals at school
- Information on emerging resources in the community

Residents across the state of Wisconsin as well as in Northeast Wisconsin region can access this service by calling 2-1-1 (or 1-800-924-5514). In addition, residents can text COVID19 to 211-211 to receive links to CDC information about the virus.

**For Medical-Related Questions**

For questions related to medical symptoms, public health and area health systems continue to recommend the following:

**1. If you are sick or experiencing mild to moderate symptoms such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath:**

- a. Contact your primary care physician.

If you do not have a primary care physician, contact your local health care system's nurse direct/on-call hotline. Hotline numbers can be found online or by calling 2-1-1.

We want to remind people that **the CDC recommends testing for people who:**

- **Experience symptoms** of fever, cough, difficulty breathing or other respiratory symptoms AND
- **Have been in close contact with**
  - a person with COVID-19 infection or

- a person who has traveled to a high-risk area within 14 days of developing symptoms (currently China, Iran, Italy, Japan, South Korea – updated regularly at [CDC.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)).

**People who do not have symptoms OR do not have COVID-19 exposure (close contact or travel) do not need to have COVID-19 testing.**

2. **If you or a loved one has symptoms that are more than mild and there is an exposure history, please call your primary care clinic to receive treatment advice before deciding to visit a clinic or hospital.** This will ensure area healthcare teams can review your condition on the phone first, then, if necessary, greet and isolate you upon arrival to minimize possible exposure to other patients and team members.

The majority of people with mild symptoms may not need to come to the clinic or hospital at all, although if you have a health condition that puts you at an increased risk, it is important to talk to a caregiver to make sure you are getting the right care recommendations. In many cases, the most appropriate course is to treat your mild symptoms at home as this will reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread to others in our community.

### **How to Minimize the Spread of COVID-19**

The best way to minimize the spread of illnesses like coronavirus is to practice every day preventative behaviors including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Practice social distancing by avoiding public events or spaces where close contact with others is expected.
- **Stay home when you are sick.**
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask.
  - CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory diseases, including COVID-19.
  - Facemasks should be used by people who show symptoms of COVID-19 to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
  - The use of facemasks is also crucial for health workers and people who are taking care of someone in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds**, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
  - If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- Practice Social Distancing
  - Minimizing contact with people outside of your home, unless absolutely necessary (e.g. work from home, cancel meetings and events, avoid mass transit, etc.)
  - If you are in a public space, remain at least six feet away from other people.

- Communicating with loved ones via phone call or electronic devices instead of in-person.
3. For up-to-date local information, visit the following websites:
    - a. [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\)](#)
    - b. [Wisconsin Department of Health Services](#)
    - c. [211wisconsin.communityos.org](#)
    - d. Local County/Tribe Public Health website

Every person can help slow the spread of COVID-19. We urge each individual to do their part to protect their health and the health of those around them.

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