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How the coronavirus spreads.

COVID-19 is a new disease. There is still a great deal we don't know about it. But we are learning new things almost every day.

One of the most important things to know is how it spreads. That's one of the keys to stopping it. Here's what experts have found so far.

Cover those coughs

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 is called SARS-CoV-2. It appears to spread mainly from person to person. It may pass from an infected person through the droplets they breathe out when they cough, sneeze or talk. These droplets

can land on people who are nearby. And those people might breathe them in.

That's why unvaccinated people are urged to keep at least 6 feet from one another and to cover coughs and sneezes with a face mask, tissue or elbow.

It may also be possible to pick up the virus from the air indoors.

Or a person may be able to get COVID-19 by touching an object that has the virus on it and then touching their mouth, nose or eyes. But this is less likely. It's still a good idea to clean shared surfaces daily.

What about silent spreaders?

Experts now believe that a number of people who are infected with the virus may show no symptoms. That means you can't count on warning signs like a fever, cough or shortness of breath to let you know that you're sick.

It is possible to spread the virus even when you feel fine. Keeping your distance from other people — at least 6 feet away outside your home — can help protect everyone.

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Summer 2021

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Good for your body and soul.

For exercise, there may be nothing like the great outdoors.

Is the gym your usual go-to place for exercise? Then you may need a change of scenery, and one with lots of it: the great outdoors.

If you need a nudge to move your exercise outside, there's plenty of incentive.

Research suggests that outdoor exercise delivers health benefits that can't be duplicated indoors. And a key one is a bigger boost in positive emotions.

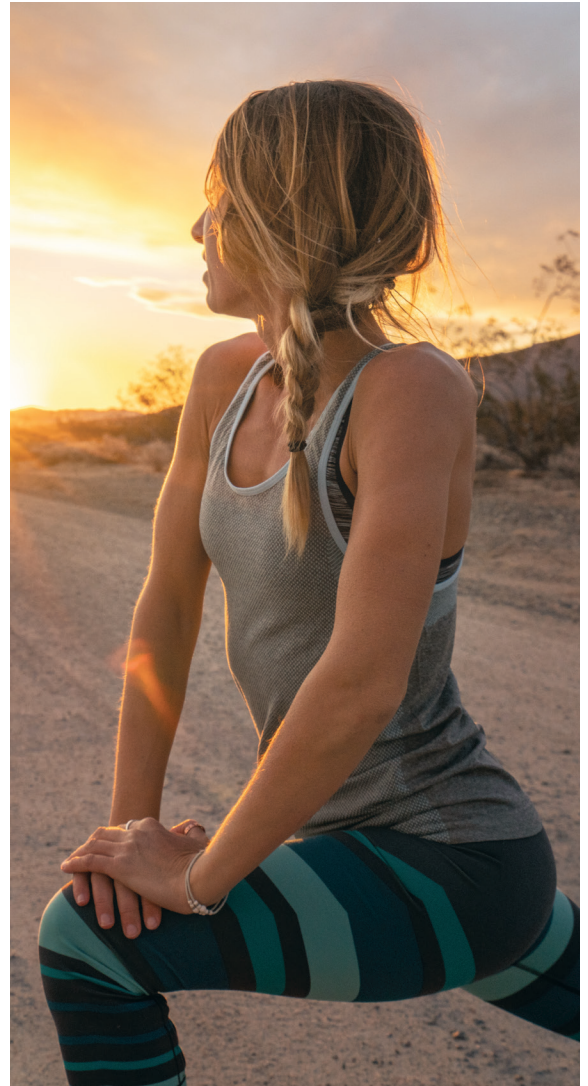
One study, for example, found that outdoor workouts can lift your mood more and help you feel more energetic and revitalized than indoor ones. Another found that as few as five minutes of outdoor exercise can improve self-esteem, especially if you're near greenery or water.

Moving your workouts outdoors also lets you:

Connect with nature. That's one of the best perks of outdoor exercise. Think of it this way: Where are you likely to enjoy exercise more, on a treadmill in a crowded gym or on hiking trail in a nearby park?

Save money. You don't need a gym membership. The outdoors belongs to all of us.

Potentially burn more calories. When you're jogging or biking outdoors, a strong headwind can help you burn more calories. You have to work harder to overcome the wind's resistance.



Get out and enjoy!

Rather than staying cooped up inside, take a brisk walk either alone to clear your mind or with a buddy to socialize. Work out your muscles on a local hill, bike on a neighborhood street, or walk one lap and jog the next at a nearby school track.

Or treat yourself to a walk in the woods, in a meadow or along a stream at a park. See if a park close by offers an exercise boot camp or a yoga class or has exercise equipment. Many parks do now.

You can turn exercise into family time too. Play on a playground with your child (or grandchild), or take a nature hike together. After all, everybody deserves to have fun outdoors.

Source: American Council on Exercise



Are your kids up-to-date on their vaccines?

Read through any writings about medical history, and you may be reminded of an important truth: Once upon a time in the U.S., diseases made a lot of children very sick.

Those diseases aren't as common as they used to be, thanks to vaccines. But most are still around — and potentially a risk. That's one of the best reasons it's important to make sure your children get their recommended vaccinations on time.

Safe immunity

Immunizations help kids safely build immunity to the diseases that the vaccines help prevent. One example is measles, a very contagious illness that can cause serious complications and even death. Measles

was eliminated in the U.S. in 2000. But since that time, new outbreaks have occurred among people who were not vaccinated.

Other diseases vaccines help prevent include whooping cough, chickenpox and meningitis.

Protecting your child is important. But there's another reason kids need their vaccines: It helps protect other members of your family and your community through herd immunity.

Part of your back-to-school list

Back-to-school checkups are a good time to make sure your kids' vaccines are up to date.

Because of COVID-19, school schedules may look different in many communities. But vaccinations are still important — whether your kids are being home schooled, attending school part time or back on a regular school schedule.

So which vaccines might your youngster or teen need? That depends on things like your child's age and vaccine history.

To see what's recommended, check out the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's schedule of children's vaccinations: **[CDC.gov/Vaccines/Schedules](https://www.cdc.gov/Vaccines/Schedules)**.

Talk to your child's doctor if you have questions about vaccines.

Additional source: American Academy of Pediatrics

Make the connection.

Changing how you think may change how you feel.

Maybe this question has been on your mind: Can my mental state affect my physical health?

Doctors have suspected for centuries that there is a powerful tie between mind and body, and modern medical studies prove them right. Researchers now know that unhealthy levels of stress, depression and anxiety can wreak havoc with your hormones, immune system, heart health and blood pressure.

Back pain, chest pain, headaches, extreme fatigue, diarrhea, a stiff neck or a racing heart are just a few of the physical symptoms that can appear when your emotional health is off-kilter, according to the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Tending to your emotional health can improve your quality of life. It also may help your body fight infections, recover from an illness and prevent chronic disease.

What helps the mind-body balance grow strong? Thankfully, research has answered that question too. These top the list:

1. **Getting a move on.** Exercise changes how the body responds to stress. It improves mood too.
2. **Finding healthy ways to relax.** Some people use music, art, prayer, woodworking, reading or even 10-minute walks to lower stress in their life.
3. **Expressing yourself.** Negative feelings and fears that are bottled up may flow out as aches, pains and problems. A trusted friend, partner or religious adviser may be able to help you focus on positives and work through challenges. Some people keep a gratitude journal or write down goals and accomplishments. Professional counseling is advised if you are stuck or feeling overwhelmed.



Finally, remember these words of wisdom: Be honest with your doctor about the stresses and challenges you face. Ask for help if you think you're feeling depressed. Your doctor can suggest many ways to improve your health and wellness — both mental and physical.

Additional sources: American Psychological Association; National Institutes of Health

Moving from pediatrics to adulthood.

How Aetna Better Health of Texas helps you plan.

What is transition planning? Transition planning is a process that begins from age 15 through age 21 that consists of regular updates to a plan of care, including readiness assessment findings, goals and prioritized actions. Transition planning should prepare the individual and parent caregiver for an adult approach to care at age 18.

Preparation should include legal changes in decision-making and privacy and consent, self-advocacy, and access to information, provide linkages to insurance resources, self-care management information, and culturally appropriate community supports.

Reminders for you

Tips for transition planning:

- 1. Begin transition planning early!** It is recommended that transition planning start as early as 15 years old.
- 2. Looking to work after high school?** Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act helps people access employment and supports they need. You can contact TWC at **1-800-628-5115** or visit **TWC.State.TX.US/Partners/Workforce-Innovation-Opportunity-Act-WIOA** for more information.
- 3. What about my waiver program?**
 - Medicaid waiver programs use Medicaid funds for long-term home and community-based services for people with disabilities or special health care needs to help them live in the community.
 - Texas has seven Medicaid waiver programs, and each one has its own interest list. Consider adding your child to all the interest lists based on their identified diagnosis and current needs. Your child should be placed on the lists as soon as possible, since some lists have 10-year or longer wait times.
- 4. What about my doctor?** Find new adult providers **before** turning 21, when your pediatric physicians and therapists can no longer see your child. Find out at what age your provider no longer treats pediatric patients.



- Put a note on your calendar every year to call **1-817-569-4140** and **1-877-438-5658** to update your information on the Medicaid Waiver/Interest lists. You can visit **NavigateLifeTexas.org/En/Insurance-Financial-Help/Texas-Medicaid-Waiver-Programs-for-Children-with-Disabilities** for more information on waivers.
- 4. What about my doctor?** Find new adult providers **before** turning 21, when your pediatric physicians and therapists can no longer see your child. Find out at what age your provider no longer treats pediatric patients.

Who can help if I have transition planning questions?

Please contact Aetna Better Health of Texas STAR Kids Transition Coordinators for further assistance.

STAR Kids (Tarrant):
1-844-STR-KIDS (1-844-787-5437)
TDD/TTY: 1-800-735-2989

Community outreach.


Our community outreach department can normally be found in the community attending health fairs and community events geared toward educating existing and potential members about our plan. In addition to providing an overview of our plan, community outreach educates our communities on STAR/CHIP/STAR Kids, Texas Health Steps, renewal and Accelerated Services for Farmworker Children.

Here are a few additional services our outreach team offers:

- **Re-enrollment assistance.** Call 211 Texas or visit YourTexasBenefits.com/Learn/Home.

- **Member Advisory Group meetings.** Community outreach schedules quarterly Member Advisory Group meetings and welcomes all members to attend.
- **Texas Health Steps Assistance.** Community outreach provides Texas Health Steps scheduling assistance for those members who need help completing their Texas Health Steps exams with their providers.
- **Member Baby Shower Program.** Come and learn about our Maternity Care Program. You'll get lots of great information to help with your pregnancy. A schedule can be found by visiting our website at AetnaBetterHealth.com/texas/wellness/women/pregnancy.



 For more information on our value-added services and programs, please call **1-877-751-9951**.

Summer is coming — think about water safety.

Drowning — it can happen in an instant. When we think of water safety, we often think of the potential for young children to drown. But drowning also is a concern for teens and young adults. While drowning is more common for children 5 and younger, it's the second leading cause of death for people ages 5 through 24.

Every pool, every lake and every warm summer day holds the possibility of new, fun summer experiences. All you need to add is your undivided attention.

Remember:

- Find age-appropriate swim lessons for your child, but keep in mind that lessons do not make your child “drown-proof.”
- Make sure the body of water matches your skill level; swimming in a pool is much different than swimming in a lake or river, where more strength is needed to handle currents.
- Learn CPR and rescue techniques.
- Never drink alcohol when swimming; alcohol is involved in about half of all male teen drownings.

How the coronavirus spreads.

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It's also important to:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Wear a face mask if you leave your home.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Then throw it out.
- Wash your hands often. Use soap and water and wash for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Clean surfaces you share with others often.
- Get vaccinated as soon as you can.

Once you're fully vaccinated, you can stop wearing a mask and social distancing in most places. But you still need to wear a mask in some cases, like on public transportation and in local businesses that require it.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



6 ways to head off falls.

Falls are the No. 1 cause of injury for older Americans. That doesn't mean falling is a normal part of growing old, though. Here are six things you can do to prevent falls.

1. **Work on your balance and lower body strength.** Tai chi is a good activity that combines those goals.
2. **Get your sight and hearing checked once a year.** New glasses or a hearing aid may improve your awareness of your surroundings.
3. **Review your medicines with your doctor.** Ask if any of them put you at risk for falls.

4. **Make your home safer.**

Get rid of tripping hazards. If needed, install grab bars next to your toilet and outside your shower or tub. Non-slip mats may help too.

5. **Get a good grip.** Always hold onto handrails when using stairs.

6. **Talk to your doctor about your risk for falling.** Tell your doctor about any falls you've had — even if you weren't injured.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; National Council on Aging; National Institutes of Health

Contact us



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Dallas, TX 75356-9150

STAR Kids
1-844-STR-KIDS
(1-844-787-5437)

TDD/TTY:
1-800-735-2989

This newsletter is published for the members of Aetna Better Health. This is general health information that should not replace the advice or care you get from your provider. Always ask your provider about your own health care needs. Models may be used in photos and illustrations.

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AETNA BETTER HEALTH® OF TEXAS

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- Provides free aids and services to people with disabilities to communicate effectively with us, such as:
 - o Qualified sign language interpreters
 - o Written information in other formats (large print, audio, accessible electronic formats, other formats)
- Provides free language services to people whose primary language is not English, such as:
 - o Qualified interpreters
 - o Information written in other languages

If you need a qualified interpreter, written information in other formats, translation or other services, call the number on your ID card or **1-800-385-4104**.

If you believe that Aetna has failed to provide these services or discriminated in another way on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability or sex, you can file a grievance with our Civil Rights Coordinator at:

Address: Attn: Civil Rights Coordinator
4500 E. Cotton Center Blvd
Phoenix, AZ 85040
Telephone: 1-888-234-7358, TTY 711
Email: MedicaidCRCoordinator@aetna.com

You can file a grievance in person or by mail or email. If you need help filing a grievance, our Civil Rights Coordinator is available to help you.

You can also file a civil rights complaint with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights electronically through the Office for Civil Rights Complaint Portal, available at <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>, or by mail or phone at: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue, SW Room 509F, HHH Building, Washington, D.C. 20201, 1-800-368-1019, 800-537-7697 (TDD).

Complaint forms are available at <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>.

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Multi-language Interpreter Services

ENGLISH: ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call the number on the back of your ID card or **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**).

SPANISH: ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al número que aparece en el reverso de su tarjeta de identificación o al **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**).

VIETNAMESE: CHÚ Ý: nếu bạn nói tiếng việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Hãy gọi số có ở mặt sau thẻ id của bạn hoặc **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**).

CHINESE: 注意: 如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電您的 ID 卡背面的電話號碼或 **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**)。

KOREAN: 주의: 한국어를 사용하시는 경우, 언어 지원 서비스를 무료로 이용하실 수 있습니다. 귀하의 ID 카드 뒷면에 있는 번호로나 **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**) 번으로 연락해 주십시오.

ARABIC: ملحوظة: إذا كنت تتحدث باللغة العربية، فإن خدمات المساعدة اللغوية تتوافر لك بالمجان. اتصل على الرقم الموجود خلف بطاقتك الشخصية أو على **1-800-385-4104** (للصم والبكم: **711**)

URDU: توجہ دیں: اگر آپ اردو زبان بولتے ہیں، تو زبان سے متعلق مدد کی خدمات آپ کے لئے مفت دستیاب ہیں۔ اپنے شناختی کارڈ کے پیچھے موجود نمبر پر یا **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**) پر رابطہ کریں۔

TAGALOG: PAUNAWA: Kung nagsasalita ka ng wikang Tagalog, mayroon kang magagamit na mga libreng serbisyo para sa tulong sa wika. Tumawag sa numero na nasa likod ng iyong ID card o sa **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**).

FRENCH: ATTENTION: si vous parlez français, des services d'aide linguistique vous sont proposés gratuitement. Appelez le numéro indiqué au verso de votre carte d'identité ou le **1-800-385-4104** (ATS : **711**).

HINDI: ध्यान दें: यदि आप हिंदी भाषा बोलते हैं तो आपके लिए भाषा सहायता सेवाएं नि:शुल्क उपलब्ध हैं। अपने आईडी कार्ड के पृष्ठ भाग में दिए गए नम्बर अथवा **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**) पर कॉल करें।

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GERMAN: ACHTUNG: Wenn Sie deutschen sprechen, können Sie unseren kostenlosen Sprachservice nutzen. Rufen Sie die Nummer auf der Rückseite Ihrer ID-Karte oder **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**) an.

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RUSSIAN: ВНИМАНИЕ: если вы говорите на русском языке, вам могут предоставить бесплатные услуги перевода. Позвоните по номеру, указанному на обратной стороне вашей идентификационной карточки, или по номеру **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**).

JAPANESE: 注意事項:日本語をお話になる方は、無料で言語サポートのサービスをご利用いただけます。IDカード裏面の電話番号、または**1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**)までご連絡ください。

LAOTIAN: ເຂົນຊາບ: ຖ້າວ່າທ່ານເວົ້າພາສາລາວ, ການບໍລິການຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອດ້ານພາສາ, ໂດຍບໍ່ເສຍຄ່າ, ແມ່ນມີພ້ອມໃຫ້ທ່ານ. ໂທຫາເບີໂທທີ່ຢູ່ດ້ານຫຼັງບັດປະຈຳຕົວຂອງທ່ານ ຫຼື **1-800-385-4104** (TTY: **711**).