

## **COVID-19 CAREGIVER CHECKLIST #3 – PREVENT THE SPREAD**

As a caregiver, it is important to protect the person you care for but also to protect yourself. It is essential to follow all precautions to limit exposure as well as any risk of transmitting the virus.

**Wash Hands Regularly and Thoroughly:** Wash your hands regularly and ask the children in your house to do the same especially after sneezing, coughing or being in a public place. To make sure the family is washing hands thoroughly, you can practice washing together and teach each other a 20-second song. Children are taught the correct length of time to wash their hands, using hard-to-forget songs like Baby Shark and Happy Birthday. Your generation has music that can help pass the time too, whether it's the beginning of Blue Suede Shoes or Splish Splash I Was Taking a Bath, sing together and share a smile.

**Avoid Touching Your Face:** Avoid touching your own eyes, nose or mouth with unwashed hands. Remind children of the same. For school-age children, you can make this into a game. For younger children, do your best to have them wash hands regularly after play and before and after eating.

**Clean and Disinfect Daily:** Focus your daily cleaning and disinfecting on high-touch surfaces in common areas in your home such as tables, hard-backed chairs, doorknobs, light switches, remotes, handles, desks, toilets and sinks. For small children, focus on their most popular toys. For older children, remind them to regularly wipe down their phones, devices and computer keyboards.

**Access Technology:** Access to the internet is important for getting current up-to-date information about the Coronavirus and available resources and supports. It is also important for many students who are doing homework at home and/or distance learning projects and for older adults to stay connected. Consider alternative ways to communicate with loved ones from a distance:

- Check with your phone, cable and internet providers who may be offering discounts on equipment and services during the crisis.
- With the right equipment, applications like Skype, WhatsApp and FaceTime can help you communicate using video while maintaining preventive measures.

**Limit Exposure:** Reduce the need to go out by doing your best to ensure enough supplies such as food and medication are available. In many cases, you can mail order the medication and use grocery delivery services, as ways to further protect the older adults in the family.

**Back-Up Planning:** Planning helps reduce panic and anxiety, so communicate a care plan among family members including back-up plans to provide care should the caregiver become ill.

*Even though U.S. hotels, transportation, and cruise ships sailing in U.S. waters are required to be ADA-compliant, don't assume that the foreign equivalent will also be compliant. Answer True or False to the questions below.*

1. *The person in your care may function at a much lower level in unfamiliar surroundings than at home. T F*
2. *People who use oxygen have to take care to be prepared with enough oxygen to get them where they need to go. T F*
3. *If a person becomes disabled with a life-threatening illness while traveling abroad, the medical personnel may not accept the validity of an advance directive. T F*
4. *A doctor's permission to travel may be necessary when oxygen is needed. T F*
5. *Passengers are required to remove or expose their ostomy bags at TSA-checkpoints. T F*
6. *Request a wheelchair for the person in your care. It will prevent fatigue and wheelchair-users are usually fast tracked through security. T F*
7. *Avoid changes in daily routine as much as possible and travel at the time of day when the person is normally the most relaxed. T F*
8. *If a person is traveling and has an illness that requires breathing devices or other life-prolonging treatments, it may be impossible to end the treatment without a medical evacuation back to the U.S. T F*
9. *People with lung disease who don't usually need oxygen may require it when traveling by plane because of the difference in air pressure on airplanes. T F*
10. *In the event of an emergency abroad, contact American Citizen Services (ACS) in the foreign offices of American consulates and embassies. T F*

**KEY:** 1. T 2. T 3. T 4. T 5. F 6. T 7. T 8. T 9. T 10. T