To

All Directors/PDs of ICAR Institutes/PDs/NRCs/ATARIs etc.

Subject :- Public health response to Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak.

As you are aware, the Government of India has taken a number of proactive measures such as travel restrictions, universal screening of passengers at airports and seaports, suspension of visas and self-quarantine measures to effectively prevent, contain and manage COVID-19. The Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) being the nodal ministry of the Govt. of India has been issuing instructions to contain/mitigate the impact of this outbreak. The instructions issued by MoHFW in this regard are being notified for information of all through all the available media viz print, social, digital, radio/FM. Accordingly, the Council on its part has dispensed with the biometric (AEBAS) attendance system in conformity with the advisory issued by the DOPT, GoI and would provide necessary instructions/advisories as are conveyed by the GoI from time to time.

2. A copy of the following instructions/guidelines issued by the MoHFW are hereby circulated for information to all concerned for their compliance :-

- Posters indicating the Do’s & Dont’s (Hindi and English versions) (ANNEXURE I)
- Advisory on Social Distancing Measures in view of spread of COVID-19 disease. (ANNEXURE II)
- Guidelines on use of masks by public. (ANNEXURE III)
- Guidelines for home quarantine. (ANNEXURE IV)

The attached posters may be suitably displayed at appropriate locations in the office/institute premises to re-inforce the message.
3. The following measures are also to be followed upto 31st March, 2020:

- Conference/Seminars/mass gatherings may be avoided. As far as possible meetings may be held through video conference instead of arranging physical gatherings;
- Contacts with foreign national, especially those from countries affected by COVID-19 needs to be avoided;
- Canteen services in ICAR Institutes be put on hold to avoid gatherings;
- Cleanliness and hygiene be maintained all around and precautions be taken for containment instead of any kind of panic.

4. Besides above instructions, the Institutes/PDs/NRCs/ATARIs etc. are also advised to follow the instructions/guidelines as are issued from time to time in connection with COVID-19 by the respective State/UT Government(s) where the Institutes are located.

Copy for information to:

1. PSO to DG, ICAR / PPS to DDGs, ICAR / PPS to Secretary, ICAR / PPS to FA, DARE/ICAR.
2. All officers/Sections at ICAR Hqrs. (through e-office).
3. Media Unit for display on website.
4. e-office Notice board.

Endt: 18-12/2020-Estt dated 19.03.2020

Copy forwarded for information and necessary action to:

1. All HD’s /HS’s, ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore-7
2. Regional/Research Centres of ICAR-SBI, Kannur/Kollam/Aval
3. The Finance & Accounts Officer, ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore-7
4. The Senior Administrative Officer, ICAR-SBI, Coimbatore-7
5. Estate (Secy.)

(S.RAMA)
Senior Administrative Officer.
Help us to help you

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Protect yourself and others!

Follow these Do's and Don'ts

Do's

1. Practice frequent hand washing. Wash hands with soap and water or use alcohol based hand rub. Wash hands even if they are visibly clean.

2. Cover your nose and mouth with handkerchief/tissue while sneezing and coughing.

3. Throw used tissues into closed bins immediately after use.

4. See a doctor if you feel unwell (fever, difficult breathing and cough). While visiting doctor wear a mask/cloth to cover your mouth and nose.

5. If you have these signs/symptoms please call State helpline number or Ministry of Health & Family Welfare's 24X7 helpline at 011-23978046.

6. Avoid participating in large gatherings.

Don'ts

1. Have a close contact with anyone, if you're experiencing cough and fever.

2. Touch your eyes, nose and mouth.


Together we can fight Coronavirus

For further information:
Call at Ministry of Health, Govt. of India's 24X7 control room number +91-11-23978046
Email at ncov2019@gmail.com
Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Directorate General of Health Services
(EMR Division)

Guidelines for home quarantine

Scope

Detection of a travel related/unrelated suspect case of novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) will be followed by rapid isolation of such cases in designated health facilities and line listing of all contacts of such cases. Home quarantine is applicable to all such contacts of a suspect or confirmed case of COVID-19.

This intervention will be limited to the initial phase of India reporting only (i) travel related cases and (ii) focal clusters arising from a travel related/unrelated case where cluster containment strategy is adopted (iii) Persons coming from COVID-19 affected areas where local and community transmission is evident.

Definition of contact

A contact is defined as a healthy person that has been in such association with an infected person or a contaminated environment as to have exposed and is therefore at a higher risk of developing disease.

A contact in the context of COVID-19 is:

- A person living in the same household as a COVID-19 case;
- A person having had direct physical contact with a COVID-19 case or his/her infectious secretions without recommended personal protective equipment (PPE) or with a possible breach of PPE;
- A person who was in a closed environment or had face to face contact with a COVID-19 case at a distance of within 1 metre including air travel;

The epidemiological link may have occurred within a 14-day period before the onset of illness in the case under consideration.

Instructions for contacts being home quarantined

The home quarantined person should:

Stay in a well-ventilated single-room preferably with attached/separate toilet. If another family member needs to stay in the same room, it's advisable to maintain a distance of at least 1 meter between the two.

- Needs to stay away from elderly people, pregnant women, children and persons with co-morbidities within the household.
• Restrict his/her movement within the house.
• Under no circumstances attend any social/religious gathering e.g. wedding, condolences, etc.

He should also follow the under mentioned public health measures at all times:

• Wash hand as often thoroughly with soap and water or with alcohol-based hand sanitizer
• Avoid sharing household items e.g. dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items with other people at home.
• Wear a surgical mask at all the time. The mask should be changed every 6-8 hours and disposed off. Disposable masks are never to be reused.
• Masks used by patients / care givers/ close contacts during home care should be disinfected using ordinary bleach solution (5%) or sodium hypochlorite solution (1%) and then disposed of either by burning or deep burial.
• Used mask should be considered as potentially infected.
• If symptoms appear (cough/fever/difficulty in breathing), he/she should immediately inform the nearest health centre or call 011-23978046.

**Instructions for the family members of persons being home quarantined**

• Only an assigned family member should be tasked with taking care of the such person
• Avoid shaking the soiled linen or direct contact with skin
• Use disposable gloves when cleaning the surfaces or handling soiled linen
• Wash hands after removing gloves
• Visitors should not be allowed
• In case the person being quarantined becomes symptomatic, all his close contacts will be home quarantined (for 14 days) and followed up for an additional 14 days or till the report of such case turns out negative on lab testing

**Environmental sanitation**

a) Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in the quarantined person’s room (e.g. bed frames, tables etc.) daily with 1% Sodium Hypochlorite Solution.
b) Clean and disinfect toilet surfaces daily with regular household bleach solution/phenolic disinfectants
c) Clean the clothes and other linen used by the person separately using common household detergent and dry.
Duration of home quarantine

a) The home quarantine period is for 14 days from contact with a confirmed case or earlier if a suspect case (of whom the index person is a contact) turns out negative on laboratory testing.
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
Directorate General of Health Services
[Emergency Medical Relief]

Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

Guidelines on use of masks by public

1. Introduction

A new disease named novel coronavirus (COVID-19) emerged in early December 2019 in China and has now spread to over 90 countries. As on 9th March 2020, India has reported 42 cases mostly among those who had travelled from affected countries. It causes a minor illness in majority of patients with symptoms of fever and or cough. A small proportion of such persons may progress to severe disease with difficulty in breathing.

It is spread by an infected person with COVID coughing and the droplets from his cough infecting others in close vicinity (less than 1 metre).

Any such new disease invariably related to cough leads to suggestions from various quarters, especially in social media, to use mask by general public to prevent the disease.

2. Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to give correct evidence based information to general public on use of mask.

3. Medical masks

Medical masks of different size and shapes are available in the market. The common ones are flat pleated masks of woven fabric which covers the nose and mouth and affixed behind the head with straps/ elastic fasteners. There are also conical or duck bill shaped masks with valves (or without valves) that fit in the contour of face over the nose and mouth, but are costlier.

4. Use of masks by general public

4.1. Persons having no symptoms are not to use mask

Medical masks should not be used by healthy persons who are not having any symptoms because it create a false sense of security that can lead to neglecting other essential measures such as washing of hands.

Further, there is no scientific evidence to show health benefit of using masks for non-sick persons in the community. In fact erroneous use of masks or continuous use of a disposable mask for longer than 6 hours or repeated use of same mask may actually increase risk of getting an infection. It also incurs unnecessary cost.
In such situation, more effective steps are:

i. Wash hands frequently with soap and water for 40 seconds. An alcohol based hand sanitizer with 70% alcohol must be used for 20 seconds. If hands are dirty or soiled, do not use alcohol based hand sanitizer, but wash hands preferably with soap and water.

ii. While coughing or sneezing cover nose and mouth with handkerchief, paper tissue. If handkerchief or tissue paper is not available cough into the flexed elbow. Dispose of tissue immediately after use and wash hands.

iii. Refrain from touching face, mouth, nose and eyes.

iv. Stay at least a metre away from those coughing or sneezing.

v. Monitor your body temperature.

4.2. When and who should use medical masks (apart from health care worker).

4.2.1. When a person develops cough or fever.

Use of medical three layer masks when ill, will prevent your infection from spreading to others. However you also need to wash your hands frequently to avoid spreading infection to others.

4.2.2. While visiting a healthcare facility.

4.2.3. When you are caring for an ill person.

4.2.4. Close family contacts of such suspect/confirmed cases undergoing home care should also use Triple layer medical mask.

4.3. Duration for which a medical mask will remain effective

A medical mask, if properly worn, will be effective for 8 hours. If it gets wet in between, it needs to be changed immediately.

4.4. Correct procedure of wearing triple layer mask

While wearing a medical mask, the steps given below needs to be followed. If you do not follow them, you may get infected from the mask itself. These steps are:

- Unfold the pleats; make sure that they are facing down.
- Place over nose, mouth and chin.
- Fit flexible nose piece (a metallic strip that can easily be located) over nose-bridge.
• Secure with tie strings (upper string to be tied on top of head above the ears – lower string at the back of the neck.)
• Ensure there are no gaps on either side of the mask, adjust to fit.
• While in use, avoid touching the mask.
• Do not let the mask hanging from the neck.
• Change the mask after six hours or as soon as they become wet.
• Disposable masks are never to be reused and should be disposed off.
• While removing the mask great care must be taken not to touch the potentially contaminated outer surface of the mask.
• To remove mask first untie the string below and then the string above and handle the mask using the upper strings.

4.5. **Disposal of used masks**

Used mask should be considered as potentially infected. Masks used by patients / care givers/ close contacts during home care should be disinfected using ordinary bleach solution (5%) or sodium hypochlorite solution (1%) and then disposed of either by burning or deep burial.
**Advisory on Social Distancing Measure in view of spread of COVID-19 disease**

Social distancing is a non-pharmaceutical infection prevention and control intervention implemented to avoid/decrease contact between those who are infected with a disease causing pathogen and those who are not, so as to stop or slow down the rate and extent of disease transmission in a community. This eventually leads to decrease in spread, morbidity and mortality due to the disease.

In addition to the proposed interventions, the State/UT Governments may prescribe such other measures as they consider necessary.

All these proposed interventions shall be in force till 31st of March, 2020. They will be reviewed as per the evolving situation.

**The following interventions are proposed:**

1. **Closure of all educational establishments (schools, universities etc), gyms, museums, cultural and social centres, swimming pools and theatres.** Students should be advised to stay at home. Online education to be promoted.

2. **Possibility of postponing exams may be explored.** Ongoing exams to be conducted only after ensuring physical distance of one meter amongst students.

3. **Encourage private sector organizations/employers to allow employees to work from home wherever feasible.**

4. **Meetings, as far as feasible, shall be done through video conferences.** Minimize or reschedule meetings involving large number of people unless necessary.

5. **Restaurants to ensure handwashing protocol and proper cleanliness of frequently touched surfaces.** Ensure physical distancing (minimum 1 metre) between tables; encourage open air seating where practical with adequate distancing.

6. **Keep already planned weddings to a limited gathering, postpone all non-essential social and cultural gatherings.**

7. **Local authorities to have a dialogue with organizers of sporting events and competitions involving large gatherings and they may be advised to postpone such events.**

8. **Local authorities to have a dialogue with opinion leaders and religious leaders to regulate mass gatherings and should ensure no overcrowding/at least one metre distance between people.**
9. Local authorities to have meeting with traders associations and other stakeholders to regulate hours, exhibit Do’s and Don’ts and take up a communication drive in market places like sabzi mandi, anaj mandi, bus depots, railway stations, post-offices etc., where essential services are provided.

10. All commercial activities must keep a distance of one meter between customers. Measures to reduce peak hour crowding in markets.

11. Non-essential travel should be avoided. Buses, Trains and aeroplanes to maximize social distancing in public transport besides ensuring regular and proper disinfection of surfaces.

12. Hospitals to follow necessary protocol related with COVID-19 management as prescribed and restrict family/friends/children visiting patients in hospitals.

13. Hygiene and physical distancing has to be maintained. Shaking hands and hugging as a matter of greeting to be avoided.

14. Special protective measures for delivery men/ women working in online ordering services.

15. Keep communities informed consistently and constantly.

Ministry of Health & Family Welfare