COVID-19 stands for Coronavirus Disease 2019. It is a respiratory disease (affects lungs and breathing) caused by a new virus called coronavirus 2019.

**WHAT IS COVID-19?**

**WHY ARE OLDER ADULTS AT HIGHER RISK?**

- Older adults are at higher risk for more serious COVID-19 illness and death.
- As we get older our immune systems grow weaker which makes it harder to fight off infectious diseases.
- Older adults are also more likely to have diabetes, lung, and heart disease that make it more difficult to recover from COVID-19.

**SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE**

- **Fever**
- **Cough**
- **Shortness of breath**
- **Difficulty breathing**

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure. Symptoms may also include chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat and new loss of taste or smell.
HOW CAN I BEST PROTECT MYSELF?

The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to the virus altogether.

• **STAY HOME.** Avoid people who may be infected by staying home and avoid any unnecessary travel. Avoid crowds. Keep space between you and anyone who is sick.

• **WASH HANDS OFTEN.** For 20 seconds with soap and water.

• **WEAR A FACE COVERING** that covers your mouth and nose.

• **AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE, NOSE AND EYES.**

• **AVOID SHAKING HANDS.**

• **AVOID TOUCHING HIGH-TRAFFIC SURFACES** such as door handles, handrails, or counters. Use a tissue or your sleeve if you must touch something.

• **SNEEZE OR COUGH INTO A TISSUE,** or the inside of your elbow.

• **CLEAN AND DISINFECT FREQUENTLY USED ITEMS** as much as possible.

• **CALL YOUR CLINIC OR PROVIDER** if you develop symptoms, i.e., fever, cough, difficulty breathing, or shortness of breath.

HOW CAN I PREPARE TO BE AT HOME FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME?

Here are some simple ways to prepare:

• **MEDICATION.** Refill all essential prescription medications. Also, be sure you have enough over-the-counter medicines and medical supplies (pain and fever relievers, cough and cold medicine, diabetes test strips, etc.).

• **FOOD & HOUSEHOLD ITEMS.** Have enough basic household items and groceries on hand so you are prepared to stay at home for an extended period of time. Stock up on non-perishable food items to minimize trips to stores.

• **REACH OUT TO FAMILY & FRIENDS.** Stay in touch with the people close to you. If you live alone, have a loved one or someone nearby check on you regularly.

WHAT ACTIVITIES CAN I DO WHILE STAYING SAFE

• Phone and video calls with family & friends

• Tell jokes & laugh

• Read books, do puzzles & play games

• Listen to music & watch favorite movies

• Get outside for fresh air, walks, & gardening

• Get plenty of sleep & eat well

• Meditation & prayer