

COVID-19: Keep Others Safe. Please Stay Home.

**By Dr. Michele Dikkers, Physician at Cornerstone Family Practice and GMHC,
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The Covid 19 pandemic is bound to impact all of us at some point.

My sister and her two daughters have been fighting it for 2 weeks, with muscle/body aches and pains, chills, headaches and shortness of breath. They describe breathing as painful, relieved only by humidification. They are fatigued, saying that even taking a shower is taxing. My sister is 47, tall, thin, healthy and works out daily. She is on day 14 and continues to have fevers intermittently of 101. Her daughters are college and high school age and started recovering on day 8, but continue with fatigue and cough. They live in Iowa.

They are fortunate to be among the 80% that will become ill and won't need to be hospitalized.

The other 20% of those that become ill WILL need to be hospitalized. To understand how many people will be impacted, look at the temporary hospitals that are being put up in New York and other places around the country, tents in Central Park, ships in ports, arena's and gyms, all there to take care of the 20% that will have severe symptoms.

PLEASE STAY HOME.

The goal of social distancing is to slow the rate of spread. We know that the illness is going to sweep through our communities. The hope is to slow it down – so we have enough hospital beds, supplies and medical staff to care for the 20% when needed.

We know people of our community will become ill. The statistics also tell us that if 5 people in a community died of influenza this year, approximately 10 times that, or 50 people, will die of Covid 19 in a community.

Slowing the spread is the responsibility of all of us. It means isolating ourselves to homes, to our communities. The less you venture out, the less you bring the virus into your home and into your community, and the less likely you are to spread the virus to your family, friends and neighbors.

It is time to take care of ourselves and each other by staying home. We must in order to get through this.

It will be a trying time, but we can do it! We can do it together!

If you have any questions, please contact your health care provider.

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