COVID-19
CORONAVIRUS
#BREAKCORONA
ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW
TO BEAT IT
IN THIS BOOK
YOU WILL FIND:

1. Covid 19: An Overview
2. About Coronavirus
3. Signs & Symptoms
4. Spread of Coronavirus
5. Myths about Coronavirus
6. Precautions to take
7. Corporate Advisory
8. Important Telephone Numbers
Dear All,

A lot has changed over the past few months with many countries of the world going through lock down. There is a great sense of unease everywhere due to this situation that none of us has confronted before. The pandemic caused by covid-19 is changing everything about life and work as we know it.

We have been blessed to be in the Sultanate of Oman under the most able leadership of His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tariq Al Said. We are most thankful to the Ministry of Health for the multiple steps that have been taken towards the wellbeing of the citizens during this crisis.

Oman with one of the best healthcare delivery systems in the world is already on a recovery phase. Observing Apollo Hospitals’ experience in India and our own experience at Apollo Hospital Muscat, we have prepared this handbook. At Apollo Hospital Muscat, we are mindful of how COVID-19 is causing much concern for many people, businesses, and establishments.

While we await for the scientific community to develop an appropriate anti body and vaccine, let us prepare ourselves, our families and work space to new safety levels. To achieve that goal we need to re-visit our safety protocols and this hand book can assist in the journey. I am sure this guidebook which is carefully prepared will be of great help to face the unfolding crisis.

I dedicate this guidebook to every healthcare professional and to every unsung hero helping the world to recover. Let me reiterate, Apollo Muscat Team is here to support you during these unprecedented times and we will do our best as a responsible healthcare provider.

‘ Good health is true wealth’
Stay safe and healthy,
With warm personal regards,

V T Saileswaran
Managing Director
OVERVIEW

The global number of confirmed Coronavirus (COVID-19) cases has edged towards 5 million while death toll has neared 3,35,584 as the outbreak continues to hit the world.

As per WHO, currently, there is no vaccine or specific treatment for COVID-19, but supportive care can help most patients recover. Precautionary measures include regular hand-hygiene practices with an alcohol-based rub or soap and water and strictly practicing social distancing.
ABOUT CORONAVIRUS

(COVID-19)

COVID-19 is the name of a disease caused by the newly discovered Coronavirus, called novel coronavirus (nCoV), first identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses, named for the crown-like spikes on their surface. Notorious for mutating quickly and acquiring new qualities, these viruses are highly contagious and can spread from human to human.

**Coronaviruses can cause diseases ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases like Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).** The novel Coronavirus, now renamed as COVID-19, is a new strain of coronavirus that has not been previously identified in humans.

**Why is it called COVID-19?**

Covid-19 (Coronavirus disease-19) is the official name given to the novel coronavirus disease under commonly agreed guidelines between WHO, the World Organization for Animal Health, and the Food and Agricultural Organization of the UN. It was earlier being called 2019-nCoV.
The following symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

Flu like symptoms

Cough

Shortness of breath

Fatigue

Fever

Gastrointestinal symptoms like diarrhoea
Emergency warning signs include:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Confusion
- Blue lips or face
- Excessive Drowsiness
COVID-19 SPREAD (TRANSMISSION)

• The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth when an infected person coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person.
• People can also catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.

• People may also get infected if they breathe in droplets from an infected person who coughs out or exhales droplets. This is why it is important to stay more than 6-feet away from a person who is sick.

The airborne route of transmission is under investigation. Of late, this has acquired a ‘superspreader’ status, wherein cases have been implicated through asymptomatic transmission or in some where the mode of transmission is unexplainable.
# MYTHS AROUND COVID-19

1. **Will I die if I get Coronavirus?**  
   No. Mortality rate ranges between 2-3% only. Almost 80% of people have mild symptoms and recover in 2 weeks. Risk of death is higher only in older people (above an age of 60 years) and people with pre-existing health conditions.

2. **Can the COVID-19 virus be passed on through food?**  
   No. Currently, there is no evidence yet that suggests that COVID-19 virus be passed on through food.

3. **Can eating meat, poultry products like chicken or eggs cause Coronavirus?**  
   No. Currently, there is no evidence yet suggesting spread of coronavirus directly through poultry products. But, it is always good option to eat only properly cooked meat.

4. **Can eating garlic prevent infection with the coronavirus?**  
   No. There’s no science-backed evidence that proves its ability to protect against the coronavirus.

5. **I will not get the virus as long as I wear a mask. Is this true?**  
   Not necessarily. While wearing a mask in a crowded place is advisable, you only need to wear a mask if you are taking care of a person with the suspected COVID-19 infection if you are healthy.

- Wear a mask if you are coughing or sneezing.
- Masks are effective only when used in combination with frequent hand - cleaning with alcohol - based hand rub, or soap and water.
- If you wear a mask, then you must know how to use it and dispose of it properly.
MYTHS AROUND COVID-19

6. Can I catch the virus through my pets?  
   No. There is no evidence to support that this virus can be transmitted through domestic pets.

7. Can foods like garlic help prevent the spread of the virus?  
   No. Garlic has many health benefits, and more people should be eating it. No food out there is guaranteed to prevent you from contracting the virus. It is not backed up by any medical studies.

8. Can high temperature, humidity affect transmission rate of COVID-19?  
   No. This is a myth. The WHO has observed that this infection can be transmitted in any and all areas regardless of climate.

9. Can taking a hot bath prevent infection?  
   No. This is also a myth. WHO says that the normal body temperature remains stable between 36.5°C - 37°C despite the temperature.

10. Can holding the breath for 10 seconds act as test for detecting COVID-19?  
    No. Experts say that a person infected with the COVID-19 virus can also hold his/her breath for longer than 10 seconds. On the contrary, the elderly will not be able to accomplish this task but it does not in any way mean that they are infected.
PRECAUTIONS

INDIVIDUAL CARE
• Wash your hand regularly with plenty of soap and water.
• Keep an alcohol-based sanitizer ready for times when soap and water are not available.
• Do not touch your eyes, mouth or nose with unclean hands.
• Keep at least 1-meter distance from anyone coughing or sneezing.
• Follow no-touch greeting. Prefer “Salam” or hand-waving over handshake.

COMMUNITY CARE
• Sneeze or cough in the inner side of your elbow and not into your hands. Or, use a tissue and throw it away immediately.
• Do not travel or visit crowded places if you are sick.
• Do wear a mask if you are sick and also if you are taking care of someone with the symptoms.
• Practice Social Distancing, which means avoid Group & Social Gatherings, Theatre outings, Crowded Retail Stores, Gyms, Malls, Mass Transport.

SURFACE CONTACT CARE
• Elevator buttons
• Doorbells
• Newspapers
• Car door after wash
• Garbage can exchange with housekeeping staff (also their ingress into housing society, and movement from house to house)
• Raw vegetable and fruits purchased
• Shop counters

• Systems (crowded busses, metro trains, etc.)
• If you are not well, seek immediate medical attention.
• If you have fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, stay indoors. Call the nearest health centre or call 24441999 and follow their advice.
Office pantry, lunchroom, washroom, and door handles
Garden seats
Play area swings, etc. (though for an unknown reason, young children thankfully are less affected)
Maids touching multiple surfaces at home
All doorknobs.
Packets of Delivery boys
Any shopping packets
Currency notes and coins
Cabs
Bus
Shoes, etc., which may step on spit
If travelling by air, then multiple points from departing terminal to the arrival terminal

DOMESTIC
Use wet wipes for cleaning around your seats
Do not touch your eyes, nose or mouth
Cough or sneeze inside the elbow or use tissues
Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer
Sanitize your hands after touching railings, trolleys, poles, handgrips etc.
Follow the protocols as advised by respective airport authorities

TRAVEL ADVISORY INTERNATIONAL

All International and domestic flights have been limited amid nation-wide lockdown as announced by the Government of Oman to prevent the COVID-19

WHILE / AFTER TRAVELLING IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT
Cough or sneeze inside the elbow or use tissues during travel
While travelling on commercial Aircrafts, wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is the most critical way to control infections, and it’s first among the guidelines for preventing the spread of disease
Sanitize your hands after touching railings, trolleys, or handgrips while commuting in Public transport
Maintain 3ft distance with anyone who is coughing or sneezing
Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands
SOCIAL DISTANCING AVOID
- Group Gatherings
- Sleep overs
- Concerts
- Theatre outings
- Athletic Events
- Crowded Retail Stores
- Malls
- Workouts and Gyms
- Visitors in your house
- Non-essential workers in your house
- Mass Transmit Systems

SAFE TO DO
- Take a walk
- Go for a Hike
- Yard work
- Play in your Yard
- Cleaning out a Closet
- Read a Good Book
- Listen to Music
- Cook a meal
- Family Game night
- Go for a Drive
- Group Video Chats
- Stream a favorite show
- Check on Friends
- Check on Elderly Neighbor

USE CAUTION
- Visit a local Restaurant
- Visit Grocery Store
- Get Take out
- Pick up Medications
- Visiting a Park
- Visiting the Library
- Travelling
Corporate Advisory
Follow the 3A – Augment, Apprise and Assist – MODEL to prevent COVID at workplace

Augment Workplace Hygiene
Encourage Individual Hygiene At Workplace
- Provide instructions and reminders at prominent places in the work area for practising “good hygiene practices.”
- Provide sanitization tools – hand sanitizers at common areas, sanitized/disposable tissues at workplaces, additional hand washes in hand washes

Encourage Workplace Hygiene Practices
- Have an internal “hygiene champion” who encourages good hygiene practices
- Provide Instructions at work desks as desktop backgrounds, table tops etc.
- Review and encourage desk cleaning practices, - swiping surfaces with alcohol swabs
- Increase washroom cleaning cycles if necessary
- Maintain cough etiquettes

Be Supportive of Sick Employees
- Monitor employee health when at work – empathize and encourage health checks in case employee is not feeling well
- Leverage in house clinical strength for information dissemination
- Provide sick leaves for quarantined cases
- Have a mechanism to make employees on leave be a part of the system when on leave via regular updates
- Adopt hygiene guidelines as part of the regular work charter
- Replace handshake with Salam
- Adapt the workplace sick leave policy as per the situation, relax working hours
- Consider extending support to the family of the employees, if sick, e.g: unpaid sick leaves for affected family members
APPRIZE THE WORKFORCE

Identify Communication Channels and Structure
Ensure that all employees have access to real-time communication on COVID-19, including updates on internal policies. Make a senior resource responsible for all communication and disseminate information via a single source. Ensure the medium chosen to share information is accessible to all resources across the hierarchy, display the information in prominent places. Use multiple channels of information.

Correct Information at Correct Time
• Keep track of new developments from WHO, Govt. of Oman, MoH
• Send information as and when it comes from verified sources
• No room for rumours policy
• Try setting up a special internal helpline number to help employees for addressing their Queries

Educate
• Distribute / Display FAQs, Myths and Facts, Helpline Numbers, Symptoms and prevention at prominent places
• Get a medical professional to talk to the employees to instil confidence and clarify their doubts
• Extend the scope of information to employees family
ASSIST THE WORKFORCE

Support Employees And Their Families

• Empathize with employees who are sick or are on quarantine by relaxing work norms for them
• Relax work norms by means of work reallocation, work from home policies, relaxed working hours, minimizing large gatherings and meetings etc
• Create and implement interim policies for essential but vulnerable population like elderly and pregnant women
• Encourage them to work from home unless critical work
• Keep a tab on their health and encourage health checks if required
• Provide separate transport facilities if the need be
• Consider unpaid family care leave to employees

Strengthen And Learn From Different Companies In The Same

• Learn, Reach out and communicate within and across industries for practices adapted by them to handle such situations

Be Part Of The Bigger Picture

• Train leadership on maintaining high employee engagement and empathy
• Assist and “adopt” impacted areas and people in the nearby community
Instructions for contacts (people) being home quarantined

- 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
- Follow strict hand hygiene rules
- Avoid sharing household items within the family members utensils, clothes towels etc
- Use surgical masks at all times. Do not reuse masks, change masks every 6-8 hours. Dispose off masks separately and treat them as biohazards
- If symptoms appear immediately inform the nearest health center or call 24441999.

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

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

• The staff to follow hand–hygiene guidelines at all times.
• The staff who is likely to come in contact with such a patient, should be wearing N 95/three ply surgical mask at all times.
• The patient should be kept at least 6 feet (or two arm’s length away).
• A three-ply surgical mask should be offered to the patients and relatives.
• The patient and relatives should be requested to wear the mask immediately.
• For patients presenting with a history of travel to China, Korea, Japan, Iran and Italy (the list shall expand based on Government of Oman directives), the patient should be taken to a confined area for detailed history and examination. Such an area (away from patient care areas) needs to be identified immediately.
• Instead of circulating papers, all communication including details of the patient (Name, Age, Mobile Number, Address) should be sent by SMS/ WhatsApp to the hospital nodal officer.
• The patient should be transferred to the Government designated facility in patient’s own vehicle / designated ambulances.
• All surfaces need to be cleaned by hypochlorite after every shift.
• The masks should be disposed properly as per MoH standard State guidelines and regulations.

In case of a telephonic conversation with a suspect patient requesting directions:
• Such patients should be directed to the designated Hospital
• Request the patient not to travel by public transport
• Provide the helpline number at designated Hospital
APOLLO HELPLINE

If symptoms appear immediately contact Apollo Emergency for screening at 24787766 / 95174158

# YOUR SAFETY IS OUR PRIORITY
YOU ARE SAFE WITH APOLLO