



Editorial

Suggested precautions for those under COVID-19 home quarantine/lockdown

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Received : 25 March 20

Accepted : 26 March 20

Published : 02 April 20

DOI

10.25259/IJMS_22_2020

Quick Response Code:



Hopefully, all of us had understood the gravity of the situation and stocked up our home requirements. However, all of us might require one or more essentials, especially for perishables. Remember our PM has clearly cautioned to use our home door as our “Laxman Rekha.” Take this seriously.

When we need to step out of the house for obtaining key essentials, the following are the recommended steps:

1. Make a list of what is likely to be required for the whole week: Vegetables, medicines, milk, bread, etc. Put down on the list alternatives/plan B. For instance, if fresh milk is not available, get Tetra-Pack milk or even milk powder. Minimize the number of times you need to step out of the house.
2. Know your neighborhood facilities that are open and/deliver to your home. For instance, Big Bazaar has publicized phone number of their home delivery service, their locations, and what they will/will not deliver. If your needs can be ordered for delivery do not step out.
3. When items are delivered to you.
 - A. When the delivery person rings your doorbell, explains to him, and ensures distance of 1 m between you.
 - B. Do not allow him/her to enter your home.
 - C. Let him leave delivery package on the floor.
 - D. Most times, you have only to give OTP to him verbally. If signature is required, use your own pen. Avoid unnecessary touching of paper or anything else.
 - E. Use the buddy system, if there is someone else at home with you. Using a dedicated scissor, cut open outer package. Ask your buddy to take out inner packing without touching the outer package. Let him bring the inner package into the house.
 - F. Dispose off or store the outer package outside the home.
 - G. Step back inside the home and store scissors inside your outside shopping bag.
 - H. Call your buddy to close and lock the door.
 - I. Immediately go to the bathroom and thoroughly wash your hands and face before touching anything and anyone.
 - J. Drink a mug of hot beverage – tea/coffee/water.
4. For items where you need to step out.
 - A. Find out which neighborhood shops are open and their timings. Phone the shop, your neighbors, or even the society watchman.
 - B. Only one adult from the family should go out. This adult should be fit and preferably younger than 60 years. No giving company. There should be no requirement of assistance in carrying the goods. Use a wheeled bag/carry-on bag if necessary.

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- C. Plan the route – remember to spend as little time outside the house as possible. If possible, phone the shop in advance and share your list. Let them pack and keep bill ready. Plan route to limit bumping into others.
 - D. Dress appropriately. Use a full sleeve shirt, full pants, full-length dress, closed shoes, and cap. Wear a mask if comfortable in it. Remember not to touch/adjust it unnecessarily.
 - E. Avoid using a wallet. Take limited currency, credit/debit card, coins, and one government-issued photo ID. Place them safely inside your shopping bag – in a disposable envelope, if possible. (On return to home keep the shopping bag, envelope, and its contents separately).
 - F. Inform family when you are going out and what time you are expected to return. If someone else is at home, do not carry home keys with you. It is expected that essentials on your list will be available within walking distance. If not, use your vehicle. Use the same vehicle and key each time. Avoid the use of public transport as much as possible.
 - G. If taking a mobile phone, also use earphones (Bluetooth/cordless preferred) so that you do not need keep touching the phone.
 - H. Keep the social distance of at least one meter. No gossiping. No handshaking. Use traditional Namaste. Be careful not to touch or brush against anything – especially those that are touched by multiple people (door handles, lift buttons, and doorbells).
 - I. Use your non-dominant hand (the left hand for right-handers and vice versa) for touching things that cannot be avoided. Use elbow or forearm or foot to open door or push buttons. There is less risk of accidentally touching eyes, nose, and mouth by your non-dominant hands.
5. On returning home:
 - A. Press bell with an elbow.
 - B. Wait for the door to be opened from inside – without touching it.
 - C. All items taken out (mask, wallet, bags, and keys) should be kept separately near the main door.
 - D. Remove footwear near the door and keep separately
 - E. Let someone else/buddy (who is already inside the home) close and lock the main door.
 - F. Immediately go to the bathroom and thoroughly wash your hands, face, and feet before touching anything and anyone.
 - G. Change your clothes. Clothes used for the trip should be directly put inside the washing machine and washed separately from other clothes.
 - H. Take steam inhalation for 5 min – remember COVID-19 is a respiratory virus and enters through mouth and nose.
 - I. Take a bath.
 - J. Drink cup of hot liquid – tea coffee/water.

Be sensible. Be cautious. Be careful. Although we might not be able to totally #AVOID exposure, we certainly CAN #REDUCE it.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

How to cite this article: Parikh P. Suggested precautions for those under COVID-19 home quarantine/lockdown. Indian J Med Sci 2019;71(3):100-1.