

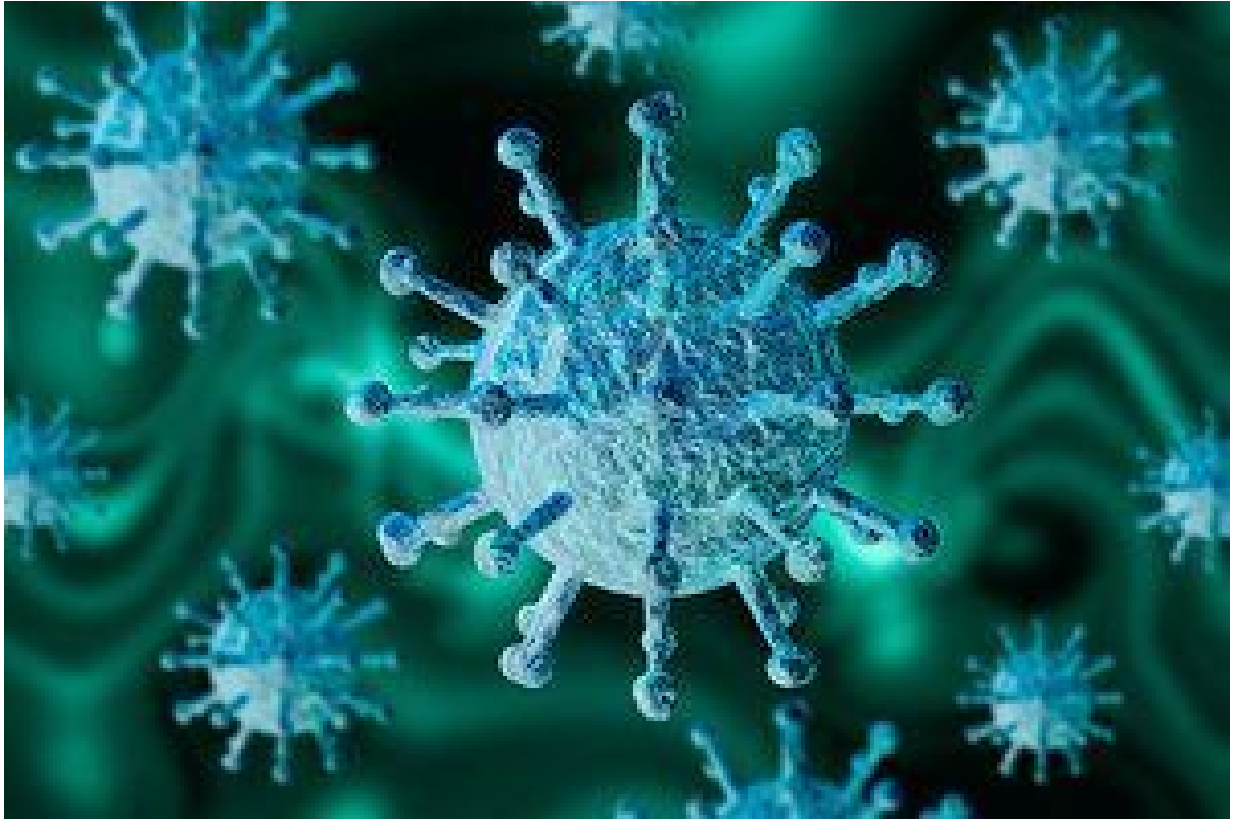
HEALTH & WELLNESS / LIFESTYLE

Coronavirus and Influenza: Precautions & Procedures

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Cold and flu season is in full swing. Regardless of the virus, it is imperative as medical professionals to be a part of the educational solution and also maintain our offices as a model of how to [take precautions](#).

1. Wash your hands under running water for 20-30 seconds with soap frequently. This may be the single most important precaution for preventing infection. An alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used unless hands are visibly soiled (e.g., any contact with oil warrants hand washing).
2. Stay home if you are symptomatic and/or running a fever (perceived or confirmed by thermometer); and ask patients to stay home if they are actively symptomatic. Anyone who is symptomatic should be isolated to a room away from others to minimize further transmission.



3.

Follow clean needle technique. This includes proper needle handling, and also diligent cleanliness and maintenance of clinic space. Frequently wipe down high-contact common and public surfaces with a disinfectant solution. Door knobs, toilet and faucet handles, front-desk surfaces, etc., should be wiped down frequently. Change out linens or table paper after each patient, and wipe down patient surfaces with disinfectant – especially face cradles that have come in direct or indirect contact with skin and or fluids (coughing, sneezes).

4. Cover your mouth and nose with tissue or cloth if you sneeze or cough; then wash your hands! Wear a face mask if you are actively ill and around other people. Refrain from touching your eyes, nose, hands and mouth (high-transmission areas).

Limit exposure to large groups in small spaces. Wash your hands frequently in public spaces and consider not shaking hands at the height of flu season.

Editor's Note: The above is excerpted from a longer article set to run in the May issue.

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