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Policy Studies Institute (PSI)



**“Listening to Young Lives at Work”**  
**CONSULTATION GUIDE ON COVID-19**  
**(CORONAVIRUS)**

**September, 2020**

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## **Introduction**

This guide is for you. In this moment of uncertainty we thought that you might find useful to have at hand a short guide with some information on coronavirus, what you can do to prevent the spread of the virus, what support the government is offering and some additional information about your own wellbeing and what to do and where to ask for help in case you need.

**We hope that you will find it useful!**

You can find this consultation guide and additional information about the Young Lives study and the “Listening to Young Lives at Work” phone survey here:

Ethiopia: <https://www.younglives-ethiopia.org/>

Hotlines: 8335 (Addis Ababa), 6244 (Tigray), 6981 (Amhara), 6955 (Oromia), 6929 (SNNP)

## **What is COVID-19?**

Corona viruses are a large family of viruses which may cause respiratory infection in animals or humans. COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered corona virus. This new virus and disease were unknown before the outbreak began in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. COVID-19 is now a pandemic affecting many countries globally. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections.

## **What are the main symptoms?**

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, dry cough, shortness of breath, and tiredness. Other symptoms that are less common and may affect some patients include aches and pains, nasal congestion, headache, conjunctivitis, sore throat, diarrhoea, loss of taste or smell or a rash on skin or discoloration of fingers or toes. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but only have very mild symptoms. Most people (about 80%) recover from the disease without needing hospital treatment. Around 1 out of every 5 people who gets COVID-19 becomes seriously ill and develops difficulty in breathing. Older people (as they have lower levels of immunity), and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness (WHO). People of all ages who experience fever

and/or cough associated with difficulty breathing/shortness of breath, chest pain/pressure, or loss of speech or movement should seek medical attention immediately.

## **What should I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms and when should I seek medical care?**

If you have minor symptoms, such as a slight cough or a mild fever, there is generally no need to seek medical care. Stay at home, self-isolate and monitor your symptoms. Follow national guidance on self-isolation.

However, if you live in an area with malaria or dengue fever it is important that you do not ignore symptoms of fever. Seek immediate medical care. When you attend the health facility wear a mask, keep at least 1 metre distance from other people and do not touch surfaces with your hands. If it is a child who is sick help the child stick to this advice.

Seek immediate medical care if you have difficulty breathing or pain/pressure in the chest. If possible, call your health care provider in advance, so he/she can direct you to the right health facility.

## **How is it transmitted?**

The virus that causes COVID-19 is primarily transmitted through droplets generated when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or exhales. These droplets are too heavy to hang in the air, and quickly fall on floors or surfaces around persons. Once they fall on floors or surfaces, it can survive up to 72 hours on plastic and stainless steel, less than 4 hours on copper and less than 24 hours on cardboard. People get infected by breathing in the virus from nearby by infected people. People who touch COVID-19 virus contaminated objects and surfaces can also get the virus when they touch their eyes, nose, or mouth.

Research indicates that children and adolescents are just as likely to become infected as any other age group and can spread the disease. Evidence to date suggests that children and young adults are less likely to get severe disease, but severe cases can still happen in these age groups.

## **How long does it take after exposure to COVID-19 to develop symptoms?**

The time between exposure to COVID-19 and the moment when symptoms start is commonly around five to six days but can range from 1 – 14 days.

## Is there a vaccine, drug or treatment for COVID-19?

While some western, traditional or home remedies may provide comfort and alleviate symptoms of mild COVID-19, there are no medicines that have been shown to prevent or cure the disease. WHO does not recommend self-medication with any medicines, including antibiotics, as a prevention or cure for COVID-19. The good news is that there are several trials on going in different parts of the world to find effective treatments and most importantly the vaccine against COVID-19.

## What can I do to reduce the risk of infection?

The chance of contracting COVID-19 can be reduced through the following precautionary measures:

- Stay at home as much as possible and avoid unnecessarily travels.
- Stay home and self-isolate even with minor symptoms such as cough, headache, mild fever, until you recover.
- Washing hands thoroughly with soap and water or disinfect with alcohol-based hand sanitizers
- Follow national guidance on social distancing. Maintain a safe physical distance from others (at least 1-2 meters).
- Avoid going to crowded places
- Wear a quality face mask, hand gloves and do not touch surfaces with your hands
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth
- Covering mouth and nose with tissue or bent elbow when sneezing.
- Keep up to date on the latest information from trusted sources, such as WHO or your local and national health authorities

Additional information can be found here:

World Health organizations: [here](#)

Ethiopia:

Ministry of Health: <http://www.moh.gov.et/ejcc/>

Ethiopian Public Health institute: <https://www.ephi.gov.et/>

Hotlines: 8335 (Addis Ababa), 6244 (Tigray), 6981 (Amhara), 6955 (Oromia), 6929 (SNNP)

## True or false: myths about COVID-19

There are a lot of myths/incorrect information circulating about COVID-19.

ET: Eating garlic, ginger or lemon might help with easing flu symptoms but there is no evidence that this can prevent catching or cure COVID-19. Likewise eating spicy hot food or drinking alcoholic liquor does not help avoid catching or curing the disease. Similarly claims that infusions of black cumin (Tikur Azmud) or herbs such as rhue (Tena Adam) or Meqmoqo (Polygonaceae) have not been shown to have any scientific validity. There are also rumours that the virus cannot spread in hot seasons but the virus spreads both in hot and cold seasons.

If you have any doubts about what is true and what is false, the first thing you should do is consult reliable source of information. You might also want to check the Myth buster webpage by WHO (click [here](#)).

Additional information can be found here:

Ethiopia: <http://www.moh.gov.et/> <https://ephi.gov.et/>

Hotlines: 8335 (Addis Ababa), 6244 (Tigray), 6981 (Amhara), 6955 (Oromia), 6929 (SNNP)

## What measures is the government taking to prevent the spread of the virus?

- The government has instituted a State of Emergency
- National borders have been closed
- A 14 day mandatory quarantining of people coming from abroad which is reduced recently to 7 days
- National elections have been postponed
- Sports events and meetings of more than 4 people have been banned
- Social distancing must be observed and handshaking is not allowed.
- Schools have been closed and university students sent home.
- Religious institutions (churches and mosques) have been closed.
- Night clubs and bars no longer to sell alcohol.
- Hotels restaurants bars should not serve more than three patrons per table and patrons less than two adult strides apart
- All transport, government and private vehicles to travel at half capacity
- The wearing of masks outside home has become compulsory

Additional information can be found here:

Ethiopia: <https://www.afro.who.int/publications/covid-19-response-bulletin-ethiopia-0>

Hotlines: 8335 (Addis Ababa), 6244 (Tigray), 6981 (Amhara), 6955 (Oromia), 6929 (SNNP)

## Parenting

During this time of confinement, you might find difficult to interact constructively with your children. We suggest having a look at UNICEF-Ethiopia webpage (click <https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/stories/parents-too-need-time-out-during-covid-19-says-trauma-psychologist>) which provide some useful tips for parents on: planning one-on-one time, staying positive, creating a daily routine, avoiding bad behaviour, managing stress, and talking about COVID-19. Other useful tips can be find in the Unicef webpage: <https://www.unicef.org/media/66146/file/COVID-19%20parenting%20tips.pdf>.

Use these resources to your and your kids' advantage and have fun in doing so.

## Mental Health

Enforced lockdowns as well as compulsory social distancing to curb the spread of the virus have led to greater mental stress, thus compromising the mental well-being for many people. Staying at homes also lead to feel stressed, confused, depression. Furthermore, the loss of a loved one or the end of a love relationship or loss of livelihoods or loss of livelihood opportunities might be an important cause of sadness, depression and anxiety. Increases in the symptoms of depression and anxiety has been reported in several countries after COVID-19 outbreak. In the case of Ethiopia, a study showed a threefold increase in the prevalence of symptoms of mental health compared to the pre pandemic prevalence rate.

What can we do to protect our mental health?

- Be aware that social isolation, quarantine, and distancing can affect you and your family's psychological well-being.
- Talk to people you know and trust to reduce mental distress.
- Avoid watching or reading too much news if that makes you anxious.
- Avoid fake sources of information about the virus.
- Set targets: setting targets and achieving them will give you a feeling of control and purpose. For this, think about all the activities that you need to and can do from home.
- Listen to music, read a book or play a game
- Avoid smoking to reduce the risk of developing severe disease upon infection
- Exercise regularly: a daily physical exercise of 30 minute for adults and one hour for children
- Keep regular sleep routines and eat healthy food.
- Create a new daily routine: try to take part of active activities such as cooking, cleaning, doing exercise. Also do activities such a reading or calling a friend.

If you need help, call to the following hotlines to get information about available services around you.

Hotlines: 8335 (Addis Ababa), 6244 (Tigray), 6981 (Amhara), 6955 (Oromia), 6929 (SNNP)

## **Suicidal thoughts**

If you're feeling like you want to die, it's important to tell someone. Help and support is available right now if you need it. You do not have to struggle with difficult feelings alone.

If you're worried about someone, try to get them to talk to you. Ask open-ended questions like: "How do you feel about...?" Do not worry about having the answers. Just listening to what someone has to say and taking it seriously can be more helpful. So, it is important that family or friends seek help from a specialist if they see behaviors or hear phrases that express suicidal ideation.

### Know the Warning Signs

Some warning signs may help you determine if a loved one is at risk for suicide, especially if the behaviour is new, has increased, or seems related to a painful event, loss, or change. If you or someone you know exhibits any of these, seek help.

- Mood swings
- Anger at aggressiveness
- High impulsiveness
- Irritability
- Prolonged sadness
- Frequent crying
- Neglect of your personal appearance
- Isolation
- Loss of hope

### Recurrent expressions

- "I'm not worth anything"
- "They'll be better soon"
- "You will see what I can be capable of"
- "Don't worry, everything will be solved"
- "This will never improve"
- "I will stop being a problem"

If you need help, please use the following hotlines to get information about available services around you.

Hotlines: 8335 (Addis Ababa), 6244 (Tigray), 6981 (Amhara), 6955 (Oromia), 6929 (SNNP)



## Violence

The World Health Organization (WHO) has said that the risk of intimate partner violence is likely to increase, as distancing measures are put in place and people are encouraged to stay at home. There have been reports of domestic violence in different parts of the country during the lockdown and police have intensified vigil to check such incidents. The current situation and the potential increased level of stress, tension and frustration due to unemployment, frustration, reduced income, limited resources, alcohol abuse and limited social support are exacerbating an existing underlined problem in our society.

Have you noticed that there is a social problem behind gender violence? Chauvinism is responsible for abuses and crimes committed against women. Surely you have heard phrases like "she was to blame for exposing herself" or "she surely caused it", we must understand that these are forms of Chauvinism that try to justify a crime and that hold women responsible for something for which they are not responsible. If you have ever been a victim of violence, remember that it was not your fault, nothing justifies situations of violence.

Women who are experiencing violence may find it helpful:

- To reach out to supportive family and friends who can help practically (e.g. food, child care) as well as in coping with stress.
- To develop a safety plan for their and their children's safety in case the violence gets worse. This includes keeping numbers of neighbors, friends, and family whom you can call for or go to for help; have accessible important documents, money, a few personal things to take with you if you need to leave immediately; and plan how you might leave the house and get help (e.g. transport, location).
- To keep information on violence against women hotlines, social workers, child protection or nearest police station, and accessible shelters and support services. Be discreet so that your partner or family members do not find this information.

If you need help, try to get information about services around you from nearby police stations and courts

We hope you find this guide useful!

“See you” soon and stay safe!

Young Lives is committed to ensuring the highest standards of ethical conduct by all personnel associated with the project. We want to make sure that our study does not have a negative effect on the safety and well-being of all people involved in the study, including resulting from my own conduct/behaviour. If you would like to make any kind of complaint on the conduct of the Young Lives staff you can:

1. Contact your Safeguarding Lead, Young Lives Ethiopia Country Director, Dr Alula Pankhurst +**251930097318** and **[alulap@gmail.com](mailto:alulap@gmail.com)**.
2. If you are not comfortable contacting your Safeguarding Lead, alternatively you can contact one of your Safeguarding Officers: The Young Lives Ethiopia Principal Investigator, **Prof. Tassew Woldehanna** [**[tassew.woldehanna@gmail.com](mailto:tassew.woldehanna@gmail.com)**] and +**251911402418**. And you can also contact the Young Lives Ethiopia Project/Field Coordinator, Chanie Ejigu **[chanie.ejigu@gmail.com](mailto:chanie.ejigu@gmail.com)** and +**251911004712**.
3. If your Safeguarding Lead and your Safeguarding Officers are not available or not appropriate for your concern, contact the Young Lives Safeguarding Co-ordinator, Diego Sanchez-Ancochea by email (**[diego.sanchez-ancochea@qeh.ox.ac.uk](mailto:diego.sanchez-ancochea@qeh.ox.ac.uk)**) or phone (**0044 (1865) 281941**).

You are strongly encouraged not to make anonymous disclosures. That being said, all disclosures, even those made anonymously, will be reviewed.

#### Help line numbers

Addis Ababa 8335 or 952

Amhara 6981

Oromia 6955

SNNP 6929

Tigray 6244

Ambulance 907



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An International Study of Childhood Poverty