

C  **VID-19 IN OLDER
ADULTS THROUGH
THE EYES OF EXPERTS**



**AKADEMİK
GERİATRİ
DERNEĞİ**

HOW CAN WE PROTECT OURSELVES AND OUR LOVED ONES FROM CORONAVIRUS?



Our dear seniors, the most important steps to protect yourselves and your loved ones are 'not leaving home' and 'not accepting guests' until the pandemic is under control.





Coronavirus is highly contagious. It can easily be transmitted if you are in the same room with the infected person even if he/she does not cough or sneeze.

Importantly, there may be no sign of illness like fever, cough or sneeze in the infected person. Especially, contacts longer than 15 minutes and closer than 1 meter are risky in terms of contamination.

In addition, individuals could take virus if they touch surfaces contaminated with respiratory particles of infected ones firstly and then touch their face, eyes, nose or mouth without washing their hands.

**THEREFORE, SECOND STEP IS WASHING YOUR
HANDS OR CLEANING WITH DISINFECTANTS AGAINST
POSSIBLE CONTACTS**

Wash the inside and back of the hands and between the fingers with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

But how? Here is the answer

After hand cleaning, it may be useful to wash our face, rinse our mouth with pure water and draw water into our nostrils (nasal wash).

But not with salt water! Salt water may be useful to relieve nasal congestion. However, due to its high amount of salt, homemade salt water may be harmful for the beneficial bacteria in our nose and mouth. Therefore, salt water may cause harm rather than benefit.

We should apply cologne/disinfectants to all surfaces of our hands and distribute it until it dries.

With frequent use of hand wash / disinfectant, your skin may become dry and irritated. For this reason, do not forget to use moisturizer frequently.

**THERE MAY BE MICROBES ON
THE SURFACE OF SHOPPING
BAGS FROM OUTSIDE;
BUT THEY DO NOT LIVE MORE
THAN 2-3 HOURS IN A DRY
ENVIRONMENT.**

*Therefore, we suggest you
to keep them in an outdoor
environment for 2-3 hours.*



*You are very dear for us.
For the days we will hug you, we need to
protect you.*

2 WE SHOULD NOT LEAVE THE HOUSE. WELL, IS IT OKAY FOR OUR NEIGHBORS TO VISIT US?

*People coming from outside can transmit you
Coronavirus.*

*You should not accept
guests during this
period.*



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SHOULD I WEAR A MASK INSIDE THE HOUSE?



Infected people should wear mask inside the house in order not to infect others.

If you are not infected with Coronavirus, you do not have to wear masks.

However, if you have a contact with outside, you should certainly wear a mask.

4 I DO NOT LEAVE HOME, I LIVE WITH OTHER PEOPLE. ARE THE FAMILY MEMBERS RISKY FOR ME? BECAUSE THEY ARE GOING OUT FOR WORK, SHOPPING OR ANY OTHER REASON. HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF IN THE SAME HOUSE?

Crowded families, especially if they include the ones with frequent contact with outside are risky for beloved seniors. Family members may organize in order to reduce the risks. Especially outsiders should take off their shoes outside the house and family members should define a room (if possible, the room nearest to the entrance) as 'dirty room' and as soon as they enter the house, they should take off their clothes inside that room and provide their disinfection.

The room should be aired every day, regularly. Outdoor items such as bags and clothes should not be removed from this room, and when necessary, they should be dressed in this room and then go out.

The main step after disinfection, as we mentioned before is hand washing. Also the surfaces frequently touched in the house should be cleaned and disinfected daily. After these steps, we should try to protect social distance in the house. Infected family members should wear masks. They should separate their plates, glasses and sheets.

Another step to protect valued seniors is to use some items personally even if no household member is infected. Towels, tooth brushes and bed linen should be arranged in this process for the individual use of family members.

5 DOES GARGLING WITH SALTY WATER (SALINE) OR RINSING THE NOSE WITH SALTY WATER, USING A THROAT SPRAY, OR GARGLING WITH BLEACH PROTECT ME FROM CORONAVIRUS INFECTION?

Salty water can be useful to open nasal congestion. However, due to the excess salt in the salty waters prepared at home, beneficial bacterial flora might also be damaged for our health in the mouth and nose and as a result, gargle with salty water may cause harm rather than benefit. Gargling with bleach is extremely harmful.



6 WHICH VITAMIN AND NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS SHOULD I USE TO PROTECT AGAINST CORONAVIRUS AND STRENGTHEN MY IMMUNE SYSTEM?

As with many infectious diseases, the immune system is very important to protect against coronavirus infection. In order to strengthen our immune system, firstly we had better have a balanced and regular diet. We do not recommend taking vitamin supplements unless they are deficient in the body. We also know that the positive effect of vitamins and minerals is at the highest level, especially when taken in form of vegetable or fruit. For this reason, our first goal should be nutrition in our home as a variety of vegetables, fruits and proteins. On the other hand; the use of multivitamins / minerals which do not exceed the recommended daily doses may be beneficial in the elderly who sustain in one-way, unbalanced diet.



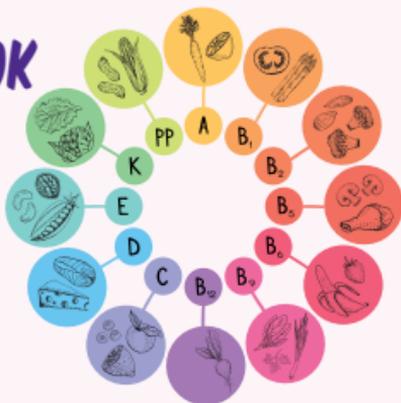
Also, daily use of 800- 1000 U vitamin D in the elderly who don't have hypercalcemia and severe renal failure seems to be beneficial for the health of bones and additional protection against infections.

Regular and sufficient sleep is also essential for the body to rest and self-repair. Regular exercise additionally helps to strengthen immunity..





WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR IN MY DIET TO PROTECT AGAINST CORONAVIRUS?



Eating a balanced diet will strengthen your immune system. Eating 3 main courses and 3 snacks in a day is the ideal diet. We should consume balanced food that contain protein (milk, dairy products, meat, eggs, legumes, oilseeds), fresh vegetables and fruits, bread and cereals. Daily consumption of 1.5-2 liters of fluid is essential. Consumed liquids can be pure water, as well as different drinks with high water content such as buttermilk, lemonade.

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DO COLLAGEN RICH FOODS PROTECT ME FROM A CORONAVIRUS INFECTION?

Those kind of foods or similar local delicacies have no particular benefit. We should take care of a balanced diet rich in protein, vegetables and fruits.



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WOULD IT BE USEFUL TO DRINK
VINEGAR TO PREVENT CORONAVIRUS?



NO.

There is no evidence of vinegar protecting against coronavirus.

However, pure vinegar may cause irritation.

So harmful effects outweigh expected benefits.

Of course, you can use vinegar or lemon in salads or other dishes as a flavoring ingredient.

10 ARE SMOKERS (INCLUDING PASSIVE SMOKING) MORE VULNERABLE TO THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE?

Smokers and passive smokers are at greater risk for developing respiratory-related infectious diseases.

COVID-19 is more severe in patients with other respiratory-related infections.



This risk is higher in smokers. For this reason, either smoking or passive smoking increases your risk of coronavirus infection and complicates recovery.

Stay away from cigarettes!



IS CORONAVIRUS TRANSMITTED WITH FOOD?

The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. There is currently no confirmed case of COVID-19 transmitted through food or food packaging.

Food can be infected with microbes. As a general principle of health, we should wash all kinds of fresh food well before consumption against the risk of carrying them to our respiratory tracts when eating.



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CAN PETS OR STRAY ANIMALS CARRY AND TRANSMIT CORONAVIRUS?

*Pets such as cats and
dogs do not
transmit
coronavirus..*



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CAN PEOPLE WITHOUT COMPLAINTS HAVE CORONAVIRUS INFECTION? CAN THEY INFECT ME?



Yes. Coronavirus can be found in the body for 14 days without complaints. During this period, one can infect another person. In addition, the person may be ill and has the disease without complaints, since his immune system is strong. For this reason, you should also protect yourself from people without symptoms.

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CAN BLOOD PRESSURE MEDICATIONS AND DIABETES MEDICATIONS BE HARMFUL FOR ME DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC? SHOULD I STOP TAKING THOSE DRUGS?



Unless recommended by your physician, it is appropriate to continue your blood pressure medications and diabetes medications.

Stopping these drugs may harm you.

The treatment of each patient is unique and the physician who knows your diseases in all aspects should decide.

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CAN ANALGESIC AND ANTIPYRETIC DRUGS HARM ME DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC? SHOULD I STOP TAKING THESE DRUGS?

You should prefer to use drugs including paracetamol as analgesic or antipyretic. You can safely use drugs containing paracetamol as recommended by your doctor.

There are uncertain researchs about the increasing sensitivity to coronavirus disease in those using drugs containing ibuprofen.

For this reason, do not use ibuprofen.

Additionally, using non-paracetamol analgesic can be cause such as stomach bleeding, kidney failure, and heart failure.

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**REPORTS OF MY MEDICINES I USE
REGULARLY ARE OVER, WHAT SHOULD I
DO? CAN I TAKE MY MEDICATION?**

*Drug reports that expire or will expire in the period
from **March 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020** will be
valid until **June 30, 2020**.*



*Even if your report period is over, you can get it from the
pharmacy without prescription.*

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DOES THE FLU VACCINE AND / OR PNEUMONIA VACCINE PROTECT ME FROM CORONAVIRUS? SHOULD I HAVE THE FLU AND / OR PNEUMONIA VACCINE?



The flu and / or pneumonia vaccine does not protect you from coronavirus.

But in addition, influenza virus and pneumonia microbes can also cause disease in patients those are infected with coronavirus and make the disease even more severe. Therefore, it may be beneficial to have a flu / pneumonia vaccine. However, we recommend the flu vaccine in the autumn every year. We also recommend pneumonia vaccines in the elderly. Pneumonia vaccines have different types thus appropriate one should be prescribed by your physician. On the other hand leaving house for getting vaccinanton can be dangerous in this quarantine period.

So, do not leave house.

18 I CAN'T LEAVE THE HOUSE AND BEING LESS MOBILE. WHAT SHOULD I DO FOR EXERCISE?

Muscles change with aging. Muscle mass and muscle strength decrease. Being less mobile can reduce the muscle mass and muscle strength and affect you negatively. For this reason, it is very useful to practice simple exercises regularly. It will have positive effects on your muscle functions and also general well-being.

[You can find these exercises here](#)

We do not want you to be less mobile at home. You should prevent your muscles from weakness during this period. Regular exercise also improves immunity.

19 I HAVE TO GO OUT FOR GETTING SALARY, SHOPPING OR FOR OTHER REASONS. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

Social Support Groups were established in the provinces and districts to meet the basic needs of citizens aged 65 and over.

When you call national emergency numbers, your requests will be met by institutions such as police, gendarmerie, municipality, Disaster and Emergency Management Authority, and Kızılay.

If you cannot use the phone, you can admit to the nearest police station or headman in your neighborhood.

20 *I AM ABUSED AND NEGLECTED. WHAT SHOULD I DO?*

When you experience these problems, you should call national emergency numbers.

Contact institutions such as police, gendarmerie, municipality, Disaster and Emergency Management Authority, Kızılay for a healthy and peaceful life. You can be sure that efforts will be made to resolve your question as soon as possible.

If you cannot use the phone, please admit to the nearest police station or headman in your neighborhood.

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WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE?

The most common and typical symptoms of coronavirus disease are high fever exceeding 38 °C, weakness, dry cough, anorexia, muscle aches and shortness of breath.

Headache, sore throat, runny nose, nausea, diarrhea are not typical symptoms of the disease and may occur less frequently.

Recent studies suggest that loss of smell and taste may be the symptoms of the disease, but this issue is still uncertain.

22 SHOULD I GO TO THE HOSPITAL IMMEDIATELY IF I HAVE THE SYMPTOMS OF THE DISEASE?

No! First call `national Corona hotline`.

They will inform you whether you should go to hospital or stay at home.

Remember, unnecessary hospital admissions increase the risk of COVID-19!

23 WHEN SHOULD I GO TO THE HOSPITAL?

In case of persistent high fever, shortness of breath, weakness, you should go to the hospital.

24 SHOULD ALL OF THE PATIENTS WITH SYMPTOMS OF THE DISEASE BE HOSPITALIZED?

No, *Those with mild symptoms can be followed up at home quarantine after evaluation in the hospital.*

25 CAN I GET RECOVER IF I GET CORONAVIRUS DISEASE?

Of course you do!



You should not lose your morale by focusing on bad news on television and the internet.

There are so many older adults aged over 100 years who have recovered from coronavirus.

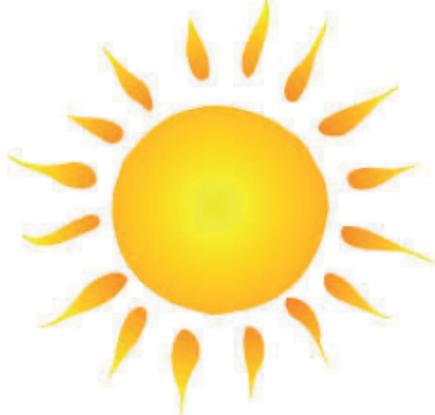
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IS THERE A VACCINE FOR CORONAVIRUS?



*There is no vaccine for **COVID-19** yet. However, scientists from different parts of the world have started working for vaccine production. It is thought that the vaccine can be developed within a period of 1 year. So, we should pay maximum attention for our protection during this period.*

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COULD THE SUMMER BRING AN END TO CORONAVIRUS DISEASE?

It is thought that the frequency of the disease may decrease with warmer weather, but since it is a new disease, we can't be sure for that.

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I AM ANXIOUS AND WORRIED ABOUT THE CORONAVIRUS EPIDEMIC, HOW CAN I HANDLE?

In such extraordinary periods, the level of anxiety may increase and this may affect our daily life negatively. Therefore, we should try to prevent and reduce as much as possible.

Watching too much news about coronavirus can make us all panic. For this reason, it is preferable to watch the news twice a day and for a short time only in order to be informed.

Activities like reading books, watching movies, gardening, and etc. could be done. Also, talking to your loved ones on the phone or video chats, looking at the photo albums will make you comfortable. Do activities you like, connect with your relatives. Talk to people you trust regarding your concerns. Avoid alcohol and unnecessary medication. Exercise helps you to cope with anxiety.



**“We are looking forward to
meeting you in healthy days”**



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