

On behalf of the Pennsylvania Board of Medicine, we want to reinforce several important messages regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. With the media coverage and the community dialogue, many wonder “What is happening and what should we all do?”

COVID-19 is a real virus and a threat to all. In medicine, we see the effects of this infection. The virus does not discriminate, and it can make previously healthy people very sick and can be deadly.

It is essential that we all continue to do the practical, ongoing preventative actions and not underestimate how significant the effect of this virus is on our lives.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues in Pennsylvania and across the country. The state now has more new cases over the past several days than at any point during the pandemic. Our **collective ongoing vigilance to smart action** remains the key to limiting illness spread and harm.

We remind all to:

1. **Wear a mask** *every* day and whenever you are near another person. It protects – you, others, all.
2. **Social distance** – seek to be 6 feet or more apart and avoid crowds. This is especially true when you are indoors.
3. **Wash your hands**, often. This helps stop infection spread.
4. **Stay home when you are ill** – even if you think it is “just a cold or an allergy”. COVID-19 looks like many other infections but spreads and affects each person differently.
5. **Talk with your doctor or care provider** if you are ill or concerned – and **follow the advice**. Isolate, quarantine, and mask as recommended – it helps.

COVID-19 is real and it has created significant health effects for many, especially the elderly and others with underlying conditions or other risks. Together, we can make a real difference by sharpening and retaining our focus on these simple steps – **it is not time to stop these steps**.

-The Pennsylvania Board of Medicine