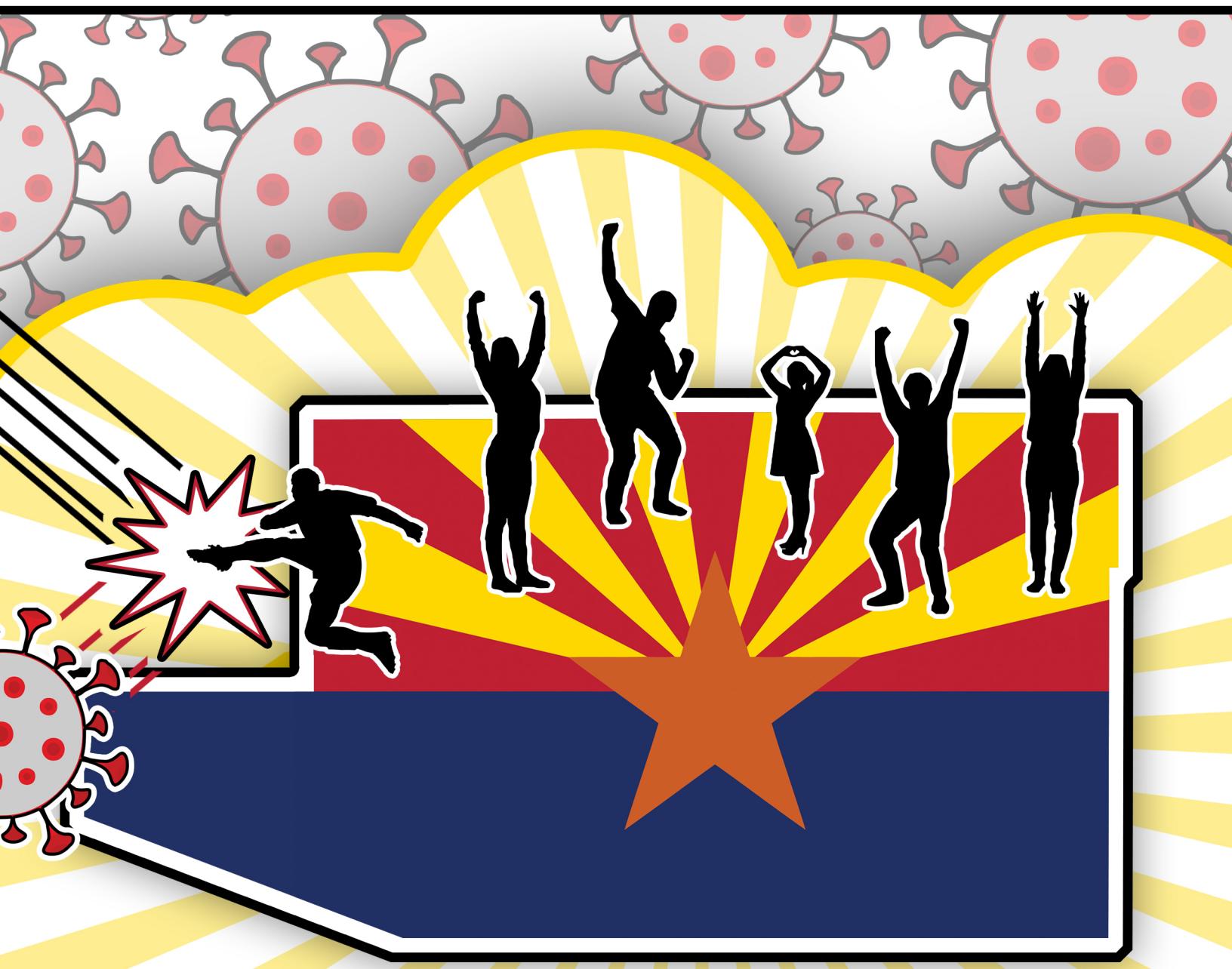




CORONAVIRUS SAFETY GUIDE

FOR SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



INTRODUCTION

I've created this safety guide to ensure that everyone has the main basic info & tips necessary so we can all stay as safe as possible in Santa Cruz County. As you know, health officials anticipate a significant surge in COVID-19 cases nationwide over the next several weeks, and Santa Cruz County will be no exception.

On a personal note, I'd like to share with you why I decided to write this. I moved here 16 years ago, having grown up 25 miles out of New York City, where my family still resides. Back in early March, I made phone calls to my parents to ensure they were prepared for the Coronavirus outbreak that was heading their way. To my dismay, both of my parents hadn't done a single thing to prepare. (?) I suppose living through 70+ years of TV news warnings that turned out to be "much ado about nothing," had left them skeptical. I pled with them to stock up, take this seriously, and get ready to weather the storm.

Fast forward to just a few weeks later, and my parents are now trapped in their homes on lockdown, with surrounding towns under quarantine, and skyrocketing infection rates circling them like sharks. They're having problems getting groceries delivered from services that are overwhelmed by demand, and it's gotten dangerous for them to set foot outside of their homes and even to open up their mail. (50 local mail carriers just tested COVID-19 positive.)

I call my father every morning, and I can hear it in his voice: he's scared. In all my life, I have never known my father to be frightened of anything. But he'd be foolish not to be deeply concerned now. Every time he turns on his TV, he's seeing body bags in NYC where people have been dying daily in droves only 25 miles from his home. He's learning about his neighbors down the street who have fallen ill, or who have passed on. He just got a notice from his local EMTs to please take good care not to get sick, because the hospitals are at full capacity, and there's no more room at the inn. A few days ago, my father asked me, "Do you think I have a good chance to survive?" My heart broke into a million pieces.

So this is what compelled me to sit down and write this guide: Over the past few weeks I've observed some of the same skepticism here in Santa Cruz County that my parents had when I first called them. And it's making me nervous. This virus is the real deal, good people. And the situation calls for being proactive, not reactive. **My parents' county started out with just a sprinkling of cases (11 on March 15th) and now 30 days later, there are 7,400+ cases with 400+ deaths and the numbers are still rising.** My beloved New York City, where I spent the first half of my career, is positively devastated.

I'm not advocating that anyone panic and freak out in fear, mind you, that will solve absolutely nothing. I'm simply saying that if you're still sleep-walking through this, it's time to wake up.

As a former NYC-based journalist, writer & editor for national publications, I have done my best to ensure that this information was gathered from trustworthy, reliable sources, and I put it all in one document for those of you who may not have had the time to do your own research. And as I realize that not everyone owns a computer, I intend for it to be photocopied and shared old-school style, in addition to being shared electronically. I have always been a firm believer in the adage that "knowledge is power." And the sooner we all get on the same page in our county, the better. We're all in this together. What any of us chooses to do, or chooses not to do, directly affects us all.

Please stay safe, everyone -

~ Lynne Marie Zerance, Writer/Journalist

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SAFETY GUIDELINES: DON'T GET IT, DON'T SPREAD IT

- ◆ **STAY HOME & STAY LOCAL:** Please follow the Stay-At-Home Order and only leave your home for essentials such as groceries or doctor appointments. When you do leave your home, please do not travel to the hotspots, such as Tucson and Phoenix, where your chance of infection is currently greater. If you do need something essential, please send only 1 person from your household to minimize the risk. **Note: All but one of the current COVID-19 cases** in our county as of this writing occurred when residents traveled out of Santa Cruz County into more highly infected areas. (Source: Nogales International)
- ◆ **PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING:** Social Distancing means standing apart from others in public spaces. 6 feet is held by most research scientists to be an adequate distance to minimize the spread. **This also means standing back as far as you can from the Essential Worker at the register.** It defeats the purpose to stand 6 feet apart from the other customers, then stand 18 inches from the Essential Worker when you get to the counter. If the Essential Worker should happen to get infected, they can then pass it on to everyone else they come in contact with – **and that can result in rapid community spread.** Likewise, if they have the space to do it, **Essential Workers should practice stepping back** when the customer has to get near the counter to pay & pick up their items.
- ◆ **WEAR A MASK:** Please follow the CDC recommendation and wear a cloth mask to slow the spread. The virus is being spread by people who have been infected, but experience no symptoms. They are known in the lexicon as “**Silent Spreaders.**” In fact, according to a recent statement by the **Director of the CDC**, “**as many as 25% of people infected with the new Coronavirus may not show symptoms,**” and “this helps explain how rapidly this virus continues to spread across the country.” (Source: The New York Times)

This is why it's important to wear a mask, even if you're feeling fine. The current highly infected areas in the US were all following the advice not to wear a mask “unless they were sick.” Meanwhile, up to 25% of infected people didn't know they were infected, so many weren't wearing masks. **This is a game-changing opportunity for Santa Cruz County. If we ALL wear masks, it will minimize the spread.**

This is especially important for Essential Workers who come in contact with the highest number of people each day. Please reduce the risk of spread: wear a mask and/or install a safety shield at your counter.

The World Health Organization also urges us to use our masks correctly:

- Wash your hands thoroughly before putting on a mask.
- Make sure it seals properly, with no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Don't touch it once it's on. If you do, wash your hands immediately.
- Take it off by removing the elastic from behind your ears, being careful not to touch the front, and wash your hands again.

- ◆ **WASH YOUR HANDS:** **Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap & water for 30 seconds.** Please do not rely solely on hand sanitizer as your only method of keeping your hands clean. Hand sanitizer can be helpful, but is generally not considered as effective as washing them, which physically removes the particles. High-risk individuals can double up by washing their hands, then sanitizing them too.
- ◆ **AVOID TOUCHING YOUR FACE:** **Please do not touch your mouth, nose, or eyes with unwashed hands.** Touching any of these areas of your face with virus particles on your hands could result in infection.
- ◆ **CLEAN OR DISINFECT ITEMS:** Though risk of virus infection from touching items is officially thought to be low as of this writing, if you want to err on the side of caution, clean any new items you bring into your home. The more hands your item has passed through before it came to you, the greater the possibility it could have active virus particles on it. To be safe, always wash your hands after unpacking new items.

- ◆ **IF YOU WEAR GLOVES, USE THEM PROPERLY:** Disposable gloves can protect your hands from direct contact with the virus when you are out running errands, or if you're an Essential Worker. But be mindful that your gloves could become contaminated, so you need to be careful not to touch your face while wearing gloves. Take off your gloves carefully when you get home, discard them, and wash your hands.
- ◆ **IF YOU ARE SICK, STAY HOME:** If you experience symptoms of the virus, call your Primary Care Physician. Here are 2 of our local numbers: **Family Health Center Patagonia:** #520.394.2262; **Mariposa Health Center Main Phone:** #520.281.1550
- ◆ **RECENT CONTACT, STAY HOME:** If you have been coughed on or sneezed on in a public place, or have come in close contact with anyone you suspect may have the virus, please play it safe and stay home. If you have to go out, wear a mask.
- ◆ **AZ GOVERNOR'S STAY-AT-HOME ORDER:** On March 31st, AZ Governor, Doug Ducey issued an executive order for Arizona: "Stay Home, Stay Healthy, Stay Connected." His order provided details on what is considered an "essential activity." If you missed it, please read the order in its entirety on <https://azgovernor.gov>, or ask someone with a computer to read it to you over the phone.
- ◆ **PLEASE DO NOT COUGH OR SNEEZE IN PUBLIC:** If you sneeze or cough unexpectedly in public, cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue or the inside of your elbow. If you have developed a regular cough or have been sneezing frequently, please stay home.

CLEVER SAFETY IDEA: The Patagonia Post Office hung a makeshift shield using clear shower curtain liners to protect its employees and residents. Credit: Martin E. Perez, USPS Postmaster



HOUSEHOLD CHECKLIST

- Hand Soap & Hand Sanitizer**
- Cleaning Supplies & Disinfectants That are Effective Against the Virus:** Lysol Spray, Cleaning Wipes or Liquid; Clorox Cleaning Sprays & Wipes; Bleach, Ammonia; Isopropyl Alcohol; Alcohol-based Sanitizing Wipes; Hydrogen Peroxide
- Cloth Mask**
- Disposable Gloves & Kitchen Gloves**
- Thermometer**
- Pedialyte or Gatorade:** If you do happen to get sick, these drinks can be very helpful for use in hydrating your body and replacing electrolytes that may be sweat out through high-temperature fevers.
- Over-The-Counter (OTC) Fever-Reducer:** Consult with your doctor to find out which OTC medicine will work best for you based on your medical condition **and at what temperature you should take it to knock down a fever, if it runs high.** (Fever is a sign that your immune system is working to kill off the virus.)
- Air Ambulance Transport/Helicopter Insurance:** If you don't already have coverage, it may be a good idea to get it now. (It takes a few days for coverage to begin after you purchase it, so waiting until you really need it to buy it is not the best plan.) **AirMedCare Network:** 800.793.0010. **PHI Cares:** 888.435.9744.
- Face Shield:** These are not very readily available, but if you're able to obtain one, a face shield can provide extra protection from unmasked people and while you're in a larger public space such as a grocery store.
- Finger Pulse Oximeter:** I've added this to our list on recommendation from COVID-19 sufferers. If you do get sick, it can be helpful in gauging whether your lungs are becoming virus-compromised by measuring your blood oxygen saturation level. (It's that little device you stick your finger into at the doctor's office.) Cost: \$30-\$60.

TIPS, FACTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◆ **The virus can be spread just through talking – it doesn't take a cough or a sneeze to spread it.** Droplets of saliva fly off your tongue when you speak. Those droplets can carry the virus and transmit it between people who are standing closer than 6 feet apart and/or not wearing masks.
- ◆ **If you're using a cloth mask, it's important to wash and dry it in between uses** to destroy any particles they may have attached to it. You can also boil it, if the fabric can handle it, to sanitize it between uses. (The virus is destroyed at 132°; water boils at 212°.)
- ◆ **If you are concerned about the possibility of infection from touching items, here's another tip:** When you get new items, place anything you don't need to refrigerate right away under a table or in another out-of-the-way spot. Let them sit there for a few days, untouched. Over time, virus particles naturally degrade on surfaces. That will make them safer to handle, as any particles on them should no longer be active.
- ◆ **Cold temperatures preserve the virus,** which means that refrigerating or freezing items will preserve any active virus particles that may be on the packaging. So if you want to be extra careful, clean anything that needs to be refrigerated or frozen with soap and water. (Do not use chemical cleaning solutions on food.) After removing an item from your refrigerator or freezer and taking off the packaging, wash your hands before preparing food.

- ◆ **How long the virus lasts on surface types:** Hard or shiny surfaces, metal, glass: **3 days**. Paper, cardboard & fabric: **24 hours**. Plastic: **3, 7, 9 days**. (There are differing reports on plastic.)
- ◆ **Disinfect all frequently touched surfaces on a regular basis:** countertops, doorknobs, drawer knobs, light switches, reading glasses, keys, computer mouse & keyboard, TV remote, faucet handles, cell phone, stove knobs, refrigerator handle, toilet seat, pens, tablet touchscreens.
- ◆ **Avoid mixing your cleaning solutions:** Some cleaning product combinations can produce very harmful fumes. **NEVER MIX:** Bleach + Ammonia, Bleach + Rubbing Alcohol, Bleach + Vinegar, or Hydrogen Peroxide + Vinegar. Better still, play it safe, and don't mix any cleaning agents.
- ◆ **Take off your shoes when you get home.** Virus-spreading droplets from sneezing and coughing fall to the ground and on floors, and they can stick to the bottom of your shoes. (There's no point in inviting it in.)
- ◆ **If you do venture out to a large supermarket or other high-risk public place** where there are many people, it is good practice to shower and put on clean clothes after you get home.
- ◆ **Pets were initially considered “safe” from virus infection in the early reports,** but there are new studies underway as of this writing with early findings that cats may be susceptible. To be on the safe side, always wash your hands before you pet your animals. And if you do get sick, the CDC and AVMA both recommend that virus-infected humans stay away from their animal companions. (Sources: Time & US News)
- ◆ **If you live in a family household, make a plan ahead of time for what you will do if one member gets sick** to avoid spreading it to the whole family. The sick family member will need to be quarantined away from the others. You'll find a wealth of information on this topic online. The CDC website has a downloadable flyer called "Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick," which covers this topic in-depth.
- ◆ **If you're making your own cloth mask, here are 2 tests that can help you make an effective one:** **1)** Shine a flashlight through the material or hold it up to a strong light to see how much light passes through. The goal is to find a material that lets through the least amount of light possible. The virus particles are microscopic, so loosely woven fabrics are not as effective. **2)** Test the fabric by holding it over your mouth and nose to ensure you can breathe through it comfortably. Use material that passes both tests.
- ◆ **If someone you know gets sick with COVID-19,** please be kind and help out, safely, if you can. For example, you could offer to pick up some groceries for them and drop it at their doorstep.

LOCAL CORONAVIRUS NEWS SOURCES

Patagonia Regional Times

<https://patagoniaregionaltimes.org/>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/patagoniaregionaltimes/>

Print Edition

Nogales International Newspaper

<https://www.nogalesinternational.com>

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/nogalesinternational/>

Print Edition

Santa Cruz County Website

<https://www.santacruzcountyzaz.gov/>

Arizona Department of Health Services

<https://www.azdhs.gov/>

Arizona Governor's Website

<https://azgovernor.gov>

THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC): SYMPTOM WATCH LIST

This section is for informational purposes only, and was adopted directly from the CDC website. Consult your local medical authority for advice. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms, such as coughing or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice.

Reported illnesses have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death for confirmed coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) cases.

These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure:

- ❖ Fever
- ❖ Cough
- ❖ Shortness of breath

When to Seek Medical Attention:

If you develop emergency warning signs for COVID-19, get medical attention immediately. Emergency warning signs include:

- ❖ Trouble breathing
- ❖ Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- ❖ New confusion or inability to arouse
- ❖ Bluish lips or face

Additional Symptoms That Have Been Linked to COVID-19 (from other reliable sources):

- ❖ Body aches & chills
- ❖ Digestive issues
- ❖ Loss of smell & taste
- ❖ Pink Eye

NOTE: The Arizona Poison and Drug Information Center is taking COVID-19 calls: 844-542-8201

THE POWER TO SLOW THE SPREAD IS IN OUR HANDS

The virus does not move by itself, people move it. Technically, the virus isn't "alive;" it's different than bacteria, fungus, or mold. (It's basically a protein shell with RNA coding. Google it.) It can't replicate itself until it infects the airway of a "host" human body. Outside of the body, it's easy to destroy. It breaks down on its own over time, and heat degrades it even more quickly. So really, it's fairly powerless on its own.

It takes people to give it "life" by becoming infected. Then they move it, spread it, and transmit it to others. So we hold the majority of the power in this situation, not the virus. We're smarter (it's brainless), we're bigger (it's microscopic), and we're stronger—until it hijacks the body, then it can be life-threatening. We can do a lot to stop it in its tracks here if we **ALL** circle our wagons and work together using a proactive and preventative approach to 'outsmart' the virus and slow the spread.

The game plan is pretty straight-forward: Wear a mask, practice 6-foot social distancing, wash your hands frequently, don't touch your face, destroy it on objects & surfaces, stay local when you go out shopping so you don't bring back more of it, and stay home as much as possible—especially if you're sick.

Let's show 'em how it's done, Santa Cruz County.