COVID-19 Questions

ORANGE COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Shopping for Groceries During the Covid-19 Pandemic

Most of us worry about catching the coronavirus from someone in the grocery store. We should also realize other people in the grocery store are worried about catching the virus from us. Keep in mind: as much as you want to avoid catching Covid-19 from others, others want to avoid catching Covid-19 from you!

A person is usually able to spread the virus several days before they feel sick. Other people never feel sick, but they have the virus and they are able to spread it to others. In other words, everyone in the grocery store – including you – needs to be considerate and careful to protect the health of others. You might have the virus; everyone you pass might have the virus.

- **DO NOT shop if you feel sick.**
- **DO NOT shop if you think you have been exposed to Covid-19, even if you feel well.**
- Be prepared and purposeful. Plan meals ahead of time and make an organized list.
- Wash your hands before you leave home.
- Wear a cloth face covering. Bring hand sanitizer with you if you have some.
- Shop alone. The fewer people there are in the store, the easier it will be for everyone to stay six feet apart.
- Clean the shopping cart with a disinfecting wipe.
- While in the store, remember you might be able to get other people sick even though you feel healthy. Also keep in mind every other shopper might be contagious even if they look well.
- If you see someone you know, greet them and keep moving. If the two of you want to visit with each other for a few minutes, agree to meet outside after you check out. Do not socialize in the store.

- Take a moment to observe how the store is organized. There may be arrows directing the way you should walk through the store. The store may be using a one-way traffic pattern through the aisles; there may be lines on the floor to define proper spacing.
- Try to shop only once a week or less. Shop when you need food, not when you simply want something non-essential.
- Only touch what you plan to buy.
- Keep six feet of space between you and any other shopper or worker.
- If someone ahead of you in an aisle is going slowly, be patient. Do not pass them unless the aisle is wide enough.
- Avoid touching your face.
- When checking out, leave six feet of space between yourself and the person ahead of you in line. If you feel the person behind you is too close to you, politely ask them to give you more room or stand in front of your cart to create more distance from them.
- If possible, pay with a debit or credit card. Try to avoid touching the PIN pad. Use your own pen, or ask the cashier to disinfect the pen attached to the machine.
- When you arrive home, wash your hands immediately. After you put the food away, wash your hands again.
- The risk of getting the virus from food or food packaging is considered low. However, cleaning the table or counter where you unpacked the food is a healthy habit, as is washing produce before you eat it.
- Keep a list throughout the week. When you run out of an item you like to have on hand, add it to the list immediately.
- Be kind to people working in the store. They are doing stressful work.

SIX FEET APART Please

Almost all of these tips involve caution, patience, and good hygiene. Stay safe and healthy!

Call the Hotline **(919) 245-6111** between the hours of **8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday**.

Email questions to **COVID19@orangecountync.gov**

www.orangecountync.gov/Coronavirus