



Important Coronavirus Reminders for Families in Indian Country

The American Indian Cancer Foundation (AICAF) is continuing to closely monitor the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), those at greatest risk for COVID-19 are older adults and individuals with serious medical conditions, including those with compromised immune systems, including but not limited to: cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease. This could affect many in our communities, but especially the elders.

“As Indigenous nations, we’ve gone through many pandemics throughout the years, relying upon our traditions and cultural values to help us navigate health and achieve well-being. Now is the time to remember and practice those important traditions. We are a people who have always respected our elders and, during this time especially, will continue to protect and care for our relatives who are most vulnerable.” -AICAF Board Chair Dr. Gary Ferguson, ND (Aleut/Unangax)

We care about your health and ask that you practice these simple precautionary measures:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, and for at least 20 seconds (sing ABCs)
- When soap and water aren’t available, hand sanitizer is a good option
- Avoid touching your face, nose, eyes, etc.
- Try to avoid contact with highly-touched surfaces like door handles, handrails, etc.
- Avoid crowds, especially in poorly ventilated areas or enclosed spaces
- Avoid all nonessential travel
- Always make sure to cover your cough or sneeze
- Stay home when you are sick

Find the CDC's complete list of recommendations [here](#).

This article from the American Society of Clinical Oncology, the world's largest cancer organization, also contains helpful information for how to protect you and your community.

“Through our traditions, culture and shared experiences, we know how to best respond to, and prepare for diseases like the coronavirus. To supplement our traditional ways of healing, we are fortunate to have global, national, and local health organizations and departments to help us slow and stop its spread. However, what we do in our home, workplace, and community is equally important. The abundant media coverage surrounding coronavirus can make it difficult to understand how to best prepare and keep our loved ones safe. While it is normal to feel frightened or confused by all the information and rumors we hear, our elders would tell us that panic is not helpful, and there are good ways to prepare ourselves. Make sure you and your loved ones continue to follow recommendations from your local clinic or health departments, and the CDC.” -AICAF Board Member Dr. Bret Benally Thompson, MD (White Earth Ojibwe)

The American Indian Cancer Foundation will continue to support the well-being of Indigenous communities across the nation. As such, we have limited our participation in large meetings and events, and all nonessential travel.

Thank you for doing your part in keeping our Indigenous communities safe and healthy.