

Talking with Clients About COVID-19

Many clients have comorbidities that can make them more susceptible to severe COVID-19 illness. As mental health and helping professionals we can educate them so that they can protect themselves from COVID-19 and build their sense of safety and stability. Below are six steps to use when speaking with clients about COVID-19.

Check in With Yourself

Before engaging with the client, check in with yourself. Ask yourself:

1. How am I feeling?
2. What am I telling myself about this?

Step 1: Introduce

Explore the topic of COVID-19 prevention.

- *“COVID-19 can be very serious for people with underlying conditions.”*
- *“I am talking to all my clients about this – can we talk about how you can protect yourself from COVID-19?”*

Step 2: Explore

Explore the client’s thoughts and feelings about COVID-19.

- *“What have you heard about how to protect yourself from COVID-19?”*
- *“What concerns do you have about going out in the community?”*

Step 3: Provide Education

Provide information on how COVID-19 is spread.

- What the coronavirus and COVID-19 are
- How the coronavirus can be transmitted between people

Step 4: Share COVID-19 Risk Reduction Strategies

- Levels of Risk
- Using Time, Space, People, & Place to assess risk
- Social distancing and hygiene practices

Step 5: Build a Sense of Safety and Stability

- Ask the client what has worked for them in the past when they’ve felt anxious or unsafe
- Offer strategies to build safety and stability



Step 6: Identify Next Steps and Support

- *“When it comes to preventing COVID-19, is there anything you find challenging?”*
- Remind the client of the helpful tools in their toolbox and government and agencies they can contact to get COVID-19 prevention resources

Facts About COVID-19

- COVID-19 is the disease caused by a coronavirus. It is more infectious and can be more severe than the flu.
- Coronavirus spreads through respiratory droplets which are released into the air from people's bodies when they talk, sing, sneeze, or cough.
- Respiratory droplets enter the body through the nose, eyes, or mouth.
- COVID-19 can affect many parts of the body, including the lungs and heart. Symptoms range from asymptomatic to severe illness and death.
- People with comorbidities like high blood pressure, diabetes, obesity, COPD, and uncontrolled HIV are at a higher risk for severe COVID-19 symptoms.
- There are several ways to prevent COVID-19 transmission, including social distancing, hand washing, wearing a mask, and disinfecting high-touch surfaces.

Levels of Risk

There are different choices that we make everyday that impact the risk of getting COVID-19. Below are several activities and their associated risks. For more information of risk of transmission, [visit the CDC website](#).

