

COPING WITH COVID-19

Leaving the Home for Essential Needs

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Do not wait until you are totally out of a needed item.

COVID-19 has changed the way we take care of our essential needs. Leaving the home during the pandemic has changed the way we go to restaurants, grocery stores, gas stations, and other businesses. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for staying safe and social distancing help with prevention of the spread of the disease.

ANXIETY WITH BUYING GROCERIES

Going to the grocery stores can be scary during the pandemic. The CDC suggests staying home if you feel sick. Going to the grocery store when there is



less traffic, such as early in the morning or late at night, will alleviate stress/anxiety

while shopping. The use of grocery pick-up service as well as grocery delivery services can serve as alternatives. Many grocery stores also have special times for older adults or people with medical conditions. It is a good idea to use these safer times, if applicable.

While shopping anxiety can occur when the shelves are empty, do not wait until you are totally out of a needed item. The stores are trying to catch up with filling shelves so if you do not find the items you need, you are not completely out. Think ahead; but follow item limits imposed by stores to share scarce items with other shoppers. Online shopping is



another option for items that are not on the shelf. That is why it is important to plan ahead. There are also services that will do shopping for you. While

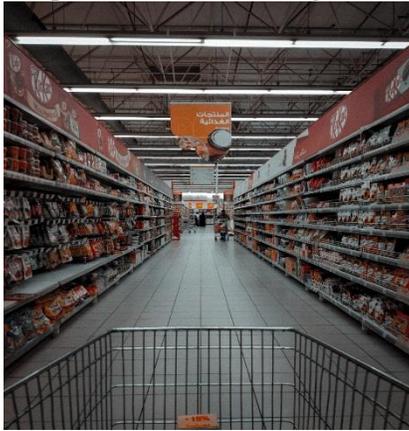
both of these options may reduce shopping anxiety, you should still use caution bringing items into the home.

SHOPPING FOR GROCERIES

There are a lot of people in and out of the stores who may have COVID-19 so being careful while shopping is important. Create a list before entering so that you can quickly get what you need. Wear a

face cover or mask if possible, and do not touch your face while shopping. Once you are in the store, wipe off the cart with disinfectant wipes. Know what you want before touching the item so you can cut down the risk of possibly contaminating an item by putting it back on the shelf if you decide not to purchase the item.

Respect social distancing rules in the store if possible. When paying for groceries, use a touchless payment option and do not touch the keypad. If you do not have that option, make sure you use hand sanitizer once your transaction is complete.



ANXIETY WITH BRINGING GROCERIES INTO THE HOME

According to the CDC, there is no evidence that COVID-19 stays on food. If you still have anxiety about the groceries once you bring them into the

home, there are ways to clean your items. Place your bags on the floor, rather than the counters.



Use disinfectant wipes to clean the surfaces of items. Take items that are in boxes

out before putting them in the cabinet. Fruits and vegetables can be washed with running water. If fruits and vegetables are in bags, you can wipe the bags with disinfectant.

Food Safety (<https://www.foodsafety.gov>) guidelines are given to help assist in cutting down cross-contamination. Don't forget to wipe your car steering wheel, door handles, and gear shift. Likewise, clean your doorknobs and cabinet handles, when you are done putting away your groceries.

Reference

Centers for Disease Control
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/essential-goods-services.html>

For General Health Information: [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)
TN COVID-19 Information: <https://www.tn.gov/health/cedep/ncov.html>
TN Mental Health Hotline: 1-855-274-7471
TN Addiction and Recovery Hotline: 1-800-889-9789

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