



STAYING SAFE AT HOME

HOW TO EXPLAIN SOCIAL/PHYSICAL DISTANCING

Together, we can slow the spread of COVID-19 by making a conscious effort to keep a physical distance between each other. Social/physical distancing is proven to be one of the most effective ways to reduce the spread of illness during an outbreak. However, understanding what it means and how it applies in situations can be challenging; explaining it to someone that may have changes in their communication, thinking and/or memory is even harder.

WHAT DOES SOCIAL/PHYSICAL DISTANCING MEAN?

This means making changes in your everyday routines in order to minimize close contact with others, including:

- avoiding crowded places and non-essential gatherings
- avoiding common greetings, such as handshakes
- limiting contact with people at higher risk (e.g. older adults and those in poor health)
- keeping a distance of at least 2 arms lengths (approximately 2 metres) from others, as much as possible

Remember to:

- wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds and avoid touching your face
- cough or sneeze into the bend of your arm
- avoid touching surfaces people touch often

- Adapted from [Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

HOW DO I EXPLAIN SOCIAL/PHYSICAL DISTANCING TO SOMEONE ELSE?

For people who are living with dementia, many struggle to remember facts, so basic “Message Boards” can be created to help with relaying, and remembering, the facts. [Dementiability](#) has created a variety of messages for individuals living with dementia that can be adapted to meet your needs.



Tips for Caregivers



- When planning the messages think about the following:
 - Who is this person in the present?
 - Can the person read and/or understand at a basic or higher level of ability?
 - How basic does the messaging need to be?
 - Let your observations guide you. Some people benefit from lots of details – others need very simple messaging.

- Example of a message:

A serious virus is spreading in our community and around the world. It is called COVID-19. The symptoms include cough, fever and difficulty breathing. We all must work together to prevent the spread of this virus. The government has said we must stay at home. We must all listen to this advice.

The new rules are: Only go out if it is necessary (for food, medical reasons or work). If you go out, stay 2 metres (6 feet) away from other people at all times. Wash hands often.

- Adapted from [Dementiability Enterprises Inc.](#)

For someone who has communication difficulties, consider using images.

[Participics](#) is a free, searchable database of pictographic images designed for people with aphasia to communicate about COVID-19 and other life events. You must open a free account to access this resource.

WHERE CAN I GET UP-TO-DATE AND MORE INFORMATION?

- [Physical distancing: How to slow the spread of COVID-19](#), Public Health Agency of Canada
- [COVID-19 Public Resources](#), Public Health Ontario
- Local Public Health Agencies
 - **Porcupine Health Unit** 705-267-1181
 - **Temiskaming Health Unit** 705-647-4305
- Alzheimer Society of Timmins-Porcupine
 - Phone number: 705-268-4554
 - Website: <https://alzheimer.ca/en/timmins>