# **Coronavirus Affecting the Way We Do Things**

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People all over the world are changing the way they greet people, wash their hands, travel and seek entertainment, among other things.

That’s because governments want to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus, also known as COVID-19. Most people will not be seriously affected by it and even if they get it will only feel like they have a cold or the flu.

On its website, the [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses) says, “Illness due to COVID-19 infection is generally mild, especially for children and young adults.”

However, even young people could spread the virus to others. To help stop the spread of the virus, people are being asked to stay home as much as possible, avoid interacting with others, especially groups of people, and keep two metres (*six feet*) away from other people. That is known as “physical distancing.”

We are also all being asked to be more thorough about how we wash our hands. Hand washing is one of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of coronavirus.

Washing your hands thoroughly and not touching your face (*especially your eyes, nose and mouth*) are two of the best ways to prevent the spread of coronavirus. (*Washing your hands properly is even more effective than using hand sanitizer, but that is a good alternative if soap and water are not available*.)

Another way governments and others are working to stop the spread of the virus is to limit gatherings of people such as at concerts and sports events. Most professional sports leagues, including the hockey, basketball, baseball and soccer leagues in North America have stopped playing games for now. Governments in some Canadian provinces have also temporarily closed places where people gather, such as daycares, schools and restaurants. (*People can still buy take-away food from most restaurants, but they cannot go there to eat for now*.) Canadians have also been asked not to travel outside Canada unless it is absolutely necessary. Many other countries now have similar travel bans in place as well.

All of these changes are temporary, and things will go back to normal when the virus stops spreading. No one knows how long that will be. In the meantime, everyone is encouraged to do their part by staying home, keeping a safe physical distance and practicing good hygiene.

**QUESTIONS:**

1) There is a lot of scary-sounding news about coronavirus, but it is important to remember that young people–and most healthy adults–would experience it like a cold or flu. However, they can still spread the virus to others, so they should do some things a little differently. List some things you can think of that people can do differently, to avoid spreading the virus.

2) What are you or your family doing differently because of coronavirus? What have you noticed changing (for instance, people are not taking cruises for now)?