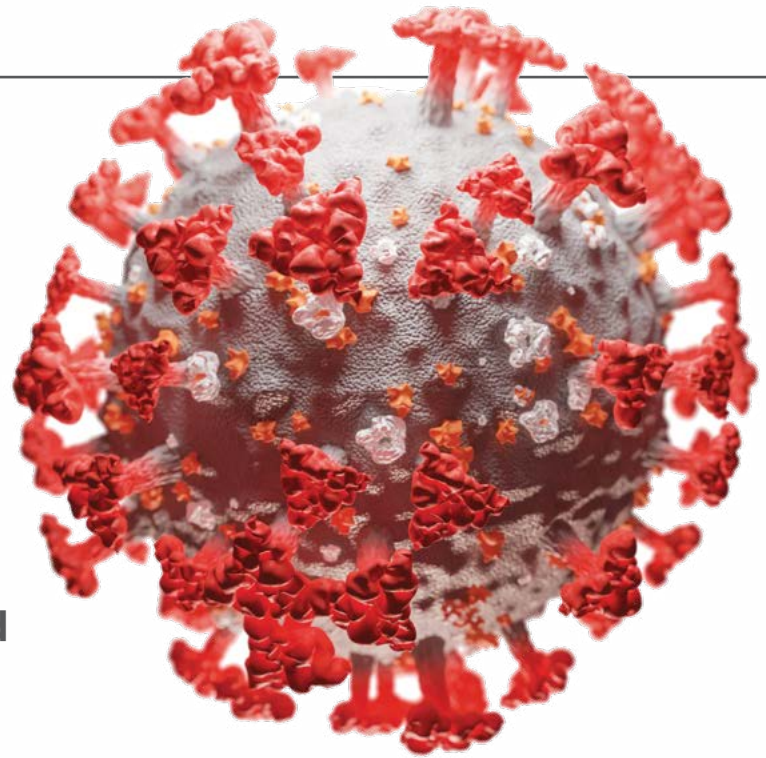


Check Up

CCA Magazine

COVID-19 Issue #3

**A SPECIAL
Q&A EDITION**



Your COVID-19 Questions Answered

- Massachusetts Reopening Update
- What Makes Activities Most Risky?
- How to Skip a Trip to the Pharmacy
- More from the CCA COVID-19 Virtual Town Hall

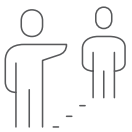
Massachusetts Continues to Reopen

On July 6, Massachusetts began Phase 3 of its 4-phase reopening plan. With each phase, more businesses and services will open with new guidelines.



We are here.

What does this mean for me?



Avoid close contact. Still keep 6 feet of distance.



Still wear a face covering when you go out.



Call your doctors to schedule appointments.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.



Phase 3 Highlights

Stay safe when you leave home: As you resume some of your daily activities, remember to: wear a face covering, wash your hands, and watch your distance to keep 6 feet apart.

Virtual visits will still be used when possible: All health care services have restarted. Reach out to your care providers now to schedule appointments and procedures. They will tell you which services you need to come in for. Visitors may be allowed too.

Group treatment programs and day programs may reopen: All in-person group treatment programs may reopen. Massachusetts will begin to reopen some day programs such as adult day health, day habilitation, community-based day supports and Department of Mental Health clubhouses.



For the latest COVID-19 and state updates from CCA, visit our website:

www.commonwealthcarealliance.org/members

What Makes Activities Most Risky?

Massachusetts is now in Phase 3 of reopening, and you may be thinking about resuming some of your own daily activities. Keep in mind: guidelines for businesses are meant to reduce the spread of illness—but they will not remove your risk of catching the virus.

How can you determine what is a safe activity?



In general, indoor spaces are more risky than outdoor spaces.

Continue to protect yourself with masks and distancing—and when in doubt, stay home.

Pharmacy Corner

Sync your Meds to Skip a Trip

“Medication synchronization” or “med sync” is when the pharmacist coordinates the refill of your medications, so you can pick them up on a single day each month. This can reduce your trips to the pharmacy, saving you time and the need for transportation. It can also help you avoid missing a refill, so you can take your medications on time.

As of March 1st, all CCA members can set up med sync with their pharmacist. This is a permanent change to make getting your medications easier.



Ask your pharmacist to start syncing your medications.

CCA COVID-19 Town Halls

In June, members joined us for virtual town halls about COVID-19. CCA leaders answered questions we received from members about how to stay safe and how to get the care you need. Read the answers below.

To watch a recording of the town hall, visit our website:
www.commonwealthcarealliance.org/members



Understanding COVID-19

Q **There's always new and different information coming out about COVID-19. If I get COVID-19, can I get it again? What else do I need to know?**

A This is a new virus, so we have to learn everything new. Experts are not yet sure if getting COVID-19 means you'll have any short- or long-term immunity. For now, it is best to assume that if you had COVID-19 once, you could get it again. What we do know is that most people who get COVID-19 fully recover. Massachusetts is continuing to track cases and they have been going down. If you feel sick or have had contact with someone who had COVID-19, call your doctor.

Q **Should I get tested for COVID-19? What if I test positive?**

A If you're showing symptoms of COVID-19, call your primary care doctor. They will help you decide if and how to get tested. If you have symptoms or test positive, you will need to isolate. Your doctor will check your symptoms and test results, and will let you know when you can start interacting with others again.

Q **Can I still spread the virus if I do not have symptoms?**

A Yes. There are reports of this, but we're still learning how those cases spread. We don't know when a person becomes contagious or how long they stay contagious. We do know people develop symptoms within 2-14 days of being exposed. So even if you don't have symptoms, help protect others by wearing a mask, keeping your distance, and washing your hands.

Q **Will there be a second wave of COVID-19 cases?**

A We don't know yet if there will be a second wave. If COVID-19 returns, our communities and governments will develop plans to help keep people safe and healthy. Create your own plan of action for your family or household.

Getting CCA Services and Support

Q What happens if I lose my MassHealth coverage during COVID-19?

A MassHealth has committed that no one currently on MassHealth will lose their coverage during the COVID-19 emergency and for one month after the state declares that the emergency is over.

Q What changes has CCA made in response to COVID-19?

A CCA is working hard to help our members stay safe and healthy at home:

- We are using virtual care—telephone and video calls—for wellness checks, routine and urgent visits, COVID-19 screenings, and to assess equipment needs.
- Our field response teams are providing in-home visits when needed. As we continue to assess needs and our ability to provide home visits safely, we will be able to see more members at home in the coming weeks and months.
- We are still providing emergency care at home through CCA's instED program.

Q Because of COVID, some CCA members have left Massachusetts. What is CCA's policy for members who travel outside Massachusetts for extended periods of time?

A Following MassHealth guidance, we are not dis-enrolling anyone from CCA during COVID-19. If this guidance changes, we would inform MassHealth that a member is out of state for an extended stay to confirm eligibility.

Q Can I still use CCA transportation to get to my medical appointments?

A CCA continues to provide transportation to medical appointments and the pharmacy for members who have transportation in their care plan. Our transportation providers follow guidelines for cleaning vehicles and face coverings, and only transport one member at a time.

Q Does CCA plan to create community forums or online support groups to connect during the crisis?

A Yes, we are exploring options right now. We also have the Member Voices Program where members share their feedback to help shape CCA services. It's a great way to connect with other CCA members. To join, call 857-246-8862 or email membervoices@commonwealthcare.org.

Town Hall Questions and Answers Continued



Meeting Your Needs

Q Does CCA have recommendations for managing my self-care during COVID-19?

A Staying home puts you at risk for loneliness and poor self-care. Stay connected with loved ones and be kind to yourself. Get plenty of sleep, eat healthy, drink water, and exercise. Keep up with medications and follow your care plan. If you feel depressed or overwhelmed, please talk to your care partner.

Q What should I do if I don't have enough food?

A Our Member Support Program can help. You have until October 31st to order up to \$100 of health & wellness items, including food, from CCA. We can also help connect you with local food assistance programs. Call Member Services for more information.

Q I need a Personal Care Attendant (PCA) but I'm afraid to interview them in-person – how do I know if they are social distancing?

A Interview them by phone and ask questions about their safety practices. Once a PCA starts, limit physical contact to only what is needed for care. You should both wear a mask and wash your hands often. Before each visit, you both should do a self-check for symptoms.

Q What should I do when flu season hits?

A We're not sure what the fall will look like yet. Our current recommendation is to plan to get the flu shot when it is available. We will continue to keep you updated.

Q How is CCA communicating with deaf members with masks?

A We may use video which can help if the member is a lip reader. For members who sign, we can use a video translation service with ASL interpreters. We are ready to support your communication needs.



Are you on Facebook? We are too!

Like our page www.facebook.com/commonwealthcarealliance

Staying Safe

Q Do I need to wear a mask alone in public spaces, like in a hallway or elevator?

A Massachusetts requires face coverings in public (indoors & outdoors) where social distancing is not possible. It keeps everyone safer. This includes: transportation, doctor's offices, and stores. While you don't need to wear a mask when you're alone at home, you should keep your mask on alone in an elevator or hallway because they are small shared spaces.

Q Will the summer heat sanitize my mask?

A We don't know exactly what temperature will kill the virus. To be safe, wash your cloth mask with detergent after use—by hand or in the washing machine. Use the warmest water possible for the material.

Q Is it safe to open the window or be outside during COVID-19?

A Yes, it is safe to get fresh air and be outside. If you will be near others not in your household—such as on a patio or porch near neighbors—be sure to wear masks and maintain six feet of distance.

Q Can mosquitos or pets spread the virus?

A Mosquitoes cannot spread the virus. The risk of animals spreading COVID-19 to people is low. A small number of pets, including cats and dogs, were reported to be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19.

Q If I test negative, is it safe for me to hug others who have tested negative?

A Testing is not perfect. For now, it is best for you to not have close contact with others if you do not live with them. As testing and monitoring improves, you'll be able to hug your loved ones again.

Q Should I be worried about getting COVID-19 if I attended a protest?

A If you attended a protest, the state of Massachusetts recommends that you get tested. If you plan on attending a protest, wear a mask, use hand sanitizer, and practice social distancing as much as possible. At this time, we're not sure if the recent protests will result in a spike in cases.

Stay Safe and Healthy at Home with LifePod

LifePod talks to you and you can talk back!

- Set up routines and reminders to stay on top of your health
- Communicate with your caregiver and CCA care partner
- Share how you're feeling
- Get entertained with news and music



Get reminders to:



**Take your
medication**



**Go to an
appointment**



**Attend a
family event**



**Drink
water**



**Do an
activity**

**And more – it's
tailored to you!**

Call Member Services at 866-610-2273 (TTY 711) to learn more about LifePod!