

# LONG TERM CARE COMMUNITY COALITION

*Advancing Quality, Dignity & Justice*

## FAMILY EMPOWERMENT TIPS: COVID, COLD, AND FLU SEASON

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As the weather turns chilly and the sniffles spread, it's important for you and your loved ones in nursing homes to stay in good health. **Here are a few tips for families and caregivers.**

### Be Proactive!

- Make sure your vaccinations – COVID **and** flu – are up to date.
- Stock up on COVID-19 tests (**free** at <https://www.covid.gov/tests>), masks, and hand sanitizer.



### Take Care of Yourself

- Being a caregiver is hard! Stay at your best by getting enough sleep, eating healthy, and following public health guidelines.

### Stay In-the-Know

- Keep in touch with nursing home staff. Establish a contact person to stay informed about your loved one.
- Ask for regular updates on COVID, flu, and other infections.
- **Be respectful** when addressing issues with the nursing home administration and staff.
- Recognize the hard work of the nursing home staff. Kindness and gratitude go a long way in building a positive environment.



### Have a Backup Plan

- Ask yourself who can visit your loved one if you can't.
- Use technology! Help your loved set up their phones or tablets for video calls, phone calls, and texting. Ask staff for support setting up calls.



### Team Up with Other Families

- Ask the administrator if there's a family council – and join it! There is strength in numbers.
- **Don't be shy.** Say hi to other families. Share your number, email, or Instagram 😊.
- Visit [nursinghome411.org/families](https://nursinghome411.org/families) or contact us at [families@ltccc.org](mailto:families@ltccc.org) to learn about family councils and family empowerment.



### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [LTCCC Fact Sheet on Infection Prevention and Control](#)
- [CMS's Critical Element Pathway for Infection Prevention Control and Immunization](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Medicine Winter Illness Guide](#)