

211 Helpline Is Here 24/7 To Assist Callers With Information On COVID-19 "Coronavirus"

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March 2020- 211 Helpline staff have been fielding numerous calls from people looking for information and resources regarding the COVID-19 "Coronavirus." 211 has been monitoring information from the CDC, the Florida Department of Health, and local officials.

Because so much differing information is being disseminated across all media platforms, it is understandable that people can become confused and overwhelmed.

"We want our community to know that we are here for them during this challenging time- to provide information as well as comfort and support ...we are here even if a person is feeling anxious and overwhelmed and just wants to talk." Commented Sharon L'Herrou, President/CEO of 211 Palm Beach/Treasure Coast.

211 is also a resource that partnering agencies can refer to as the coronavirus becomes more impactful.

If someone is experiencing symptoms, medical professionals have also recommended using telehealth (also known as telemedicine) if an individual or family's insurance carrier provides this option. The online doctor can make the determination if an emergency room visit is necessary or if isolation is recommended. Some medical facilities may be offering free telehealth during this time.

Or call the Florida Health Department at 1-(866)779-6121 to be triaged. Because of limited availability of tests right now- people that think they may have been exposed can self-quarantine and follow recommended precautions.

In general, pay particular attention to the elderly and those individuals that may have weakened immune systems, try to limit exposure to others or to the general public. Stock supplies as you would for hurricane preparation to minimize trips out into the community which may help keep loved ones safe.

Most health experts agree that simple hygiene tips like sneezing into a tissue or an elbow or thoroughly washing hands and not touching eyes, nose or face in general can go a long way in keeping individuals, families and the community safe.

Dial 2-1-1 or text your zip code to TXT211 (898211) for more information. Calls to 211 are free, confidential and available 24/7. If you or someone you know is having a mental health crisis or thoughts of suicide, Dial 2-1-1 and if requested- a Mobile Crisis Response team can be dispatched. Nonprofit 211 Helpline's mission is to connect people to services 24 hours a day by understanding their individual emotional, financial and community needs and to support the health & human service system as a whole.