

Deafblind and COVID 19 - Dear deafblind friends,

"Stay home, stay healthy and be connected."

No need to worry.

No panic.

Coronavirus causes symptoms called COVID 19.

No cure yet but preventable with your action.

Coronavirus is transmitted from other person through cough, touch, and even close contact, especially in crowd.

Pandemic means coronavirus is now all over in the world. Many events are cancelled. Many shops and restaurants are closed.

We, deafblind people, are now in unique challenge. Do not touch, but we cannot live without touch and close contact with others.

10 tips for the Deafblind,

1. [STAY HOME]

Most important.

2. [BE CLEAN]

Wash your hands with soap and running water more frequently than usual. 20 seconds is good.

Surfaces of your glasses, hearing aids and communication devices also must stay clean.

3. [STAY HEALTHY]

Eat well, sleep well, and do some exercise.

Healthy life style helps you not to be sick even if infected with coronavirus.

4. [FRESH AIR]

Open windows time to time. Room air needs circulation.

5. [No inviting friends]

No party now.

6. [KEEP INFORMED]
Use ICT wisely if you can.
7. [LIMITED DIRECT CONTACT]
Interpreters may visit your home to hear your government and community announcement. Short talk is ok.
Better to limit 1 same interpreter if possible. No expose to many people coming from outside.
8. [PREPARE CARD]
Prepare a card. Write down clearly "I am deafblind (visual and hearing disabilities). I need an interpreter and guide" and your name.
If you must move to unfamiliar place, the card will be helpful. New people may not notice that you are deafblind.
9. [TELEWORK]
Work from home if available.
10. [BE CONNECCTED]
Better to be with someone if your situation allows.

5 tips who support deafblind people,

1. [BE AN ADVOCATE]
Do not leave deafblind people from community information they should know. Be an advocate because you could be a lifeline for deafblind people.
Respect their communication style.
2. [BE SUPPORTIVE]
Please assist deafblind people if they live isolated in limited access to getting essential daily goods and medicine in your capacity. Better not to go out together.
3. [LOG YOUR ACTIVITIES]
Log when and where you went, and who to meet with. Deafblind person you support may need such information.
4. [STAY HEALTHY AND CLEAN]
Avoid touching deafblind people if you are sick.
5. [STAY SAFE]

Either you or deafblind person must wear a mask. If deafblind person must see your lips in communication, ask deafblind person to use a mask.

Wash your hands before talk.

*This release was drafted by Akiko Fukuda, former Secretary General of the World Federation of the Deafblind, and currently a coordinator of Asia Deafblind Network, as of March 25, 2020.