PROVA NR. 3

Coronavirus, Social and Physical Distancing and Self-Quarantine

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Now that the new coronavirus and COVID-19, the illness it causes, are spreading among communities in the United States and other countries, phrases such as "physical distancing," "self-quarantine" and "flattening the curve" are showing up in the media.

What do they mean, and how might they apply to you, your family and your community?

Lisa Maragakis, M.D., M.P.H. , senior director of infection prevention at Johns Hopkins, helps clarify these concepts so you can understand better why they're being recommended.

How can I practice physical distancing?

Wear a face mask or covering when you are not in your home and whenever you are around people who are not members of your household. Maintain at least 6 feet of distance between yourself and others. Avoid crowded places, particularly indoors, and events that are likely to draw crowds.

Other examples of social and physical distancing to avoid larger crowds or crowded spaces are:

- Working from home instead of at the office

- Closing schools or switching to online classes

- Visiting loved ones by electronic devices instead of in person

- Cancelling or postponing conferences and large meetings

A large number of people becoming very sick over the course of a few days could overwhelm a hospital or care facility. Too many people becoming severely ill with COVID-19 at roughly the same time could result in a shortage of hospital beds, equipment or doctors.

On a graph, a sudden surge in patients over a short time could be represented as a tall, narrow curve.

On the other hand, if that same large number of patients arrived at the hospital at a slower rate, for example, over the course of several weeks, the line of the graph would look like a longer, flatter curve.

In this situation, fewer patients would arrive at the hospital each day. There would be a better chance of the hospital being able to keep up with adequate supplies, beds and health care providers to care for them.