

## Important Information about COVID-19 and Your Participation in NSDUH

This document contains important information about COVID-19 and how participating in research may impact you. COVID-19 is the disease caused by a newly identified type of coronavirus. Study participation will include visiting with a NSDUH interviewer. Having an interviewer come into your home may increase the risk of being exposed to COVID-19. If the interviewer who conducts the screening or interview(s) tests positive for COVID-19 in the future, the state or local health department or their agents may reach out to this household for the purpose of contact tracing. Please be assured that if this occurs, the interviewer will only share with the health department or their agents the address of this household and the time and dates of the interviewer's visits. None of the answers you provide during the screening or interview will be shared. It is also possible that the contact tracers may use the address shared by the interviewer to find other means to contact this household such as by phone or email.

**How is COVID-19 spread?** People can catch COVID-19 from other people who have the virus. The disease spreads mainly from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth, which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs, sneezes, or speaks. It is also possible that people can contract COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it, then touching their mouth, nose, or eyes.

**What are the symptoms of COVID-19?** Symptoms of COVID-19 may include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Symptoms typically appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. It is possible that individuals with the COVID-19 virus will not display any of these symptoms. You can find more information at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>.

**What are some ways to reduce the risk of getting or spreading COVID-19?**

- Regularly wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Maintain at least 6 feet between yourself and others.
- Avoid going to crowded places where you are more likely to come into close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and it is more difficult to maintain physical distance.
- Wear a mask that covers your mouth and nose when you go out in public or have in-person contact with someone from outside of your household.
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Your hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body.
  - If you are not wearing a mask and need to cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a bent elbow or tissue.

**What happens if someone gets COVID-19?** People with COVID-19 may have a wide range of symptoms—ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. **Older adults and people who already have serious medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing complications or dying from COVID-19.** Although vaccines and limited treatment options have been identified, they may not be readily available in your community or to all individuals. We want to provide you this information because your choice about whether to participate in this study or to invite an interviewer into your home might be informed by whether there is someone in your household who is older or has a medical condition that increases the risk of becoming severely ill as a result of COVID-19.

**How do I know a NSDUH interviewer does not have COVID-19?** Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that an interviewer does not have COVID-19. This is because individuals can have the virus but only have mild symptoms or even no symptoms of COVID-19 at all. However, interviewers have promised to take their temperature every day and are not allowed to work if they have a fever. Interviewers have also promised that they will not conduct in-person data collection if they or any members of their household show symptoms of or have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

**What steps are interviewers required to take to keep me and others safe?** While out in the field, an interviewer is required to use hand sanitizer frequently and wear gloves during the interview. The interviewer must wear a mask to help reduce the likelihood that he or she could give you COVID-19. The interviewer will practice social distancing, which means he or she will sit or stand at least 6 feet from you and other persons when possible during the interview. The interviewer will not have physical contact with you or other members of your household.

**Do I have to wear a mask if I want to participate?** Out of an abundance of caution, and for the protection of those involved, interviewers and participants are required to wear masks during all interviews administered by an employee of RTI International. This requirement is based on current science and is consistent with best practices for people interacting during this COVID-19 pandemic, in particular when indoors and/or in close contact for more than 15 minutes. The interviewer has a disposable face mask available that they can provide to you at your request.

**Do we have to do the interview inside my home?** The NSDUH interview does not have to be conducted inside your home. You and the interviewer can talk outside—on a porch or steps, in your yard, or in some nearby public outdoor space that allows sufficient privacy. If you want to do the interview at another location, you and the interviewer will have to maintain social distance from each other as well as other people. We must keep our interviews confidential so we need a location where no one will be able to hear or see your answers.

**Do I have to touch anything to participate in the interview?** Yes, but objects you will touch during the study will be sanitized prior to your use. For example, computer equipment is cleaned with a disinfecting wipe before each interview. Headphones have disposable earphone covers for your protection. Cards the interviewer might use to show you information are laminated and sanitized between interviews. Other paper forms are single-use and have not been touched by other participants.

**If you have additional questions about your participation in NSDUH, please call 1-800-848-4079.**