Tips for Health and Wellness for Tribal Elders

As an Elder you are a respected and treasured member of your community. Maintaining your community role as a Tribal elder can be challenging in these times. As our knowledge keepers, it is crucial that during this time we preserve and share the stories and traditions of your Tribe. We hope this information is helpful to you to live a healthy, balanced life. For more information about how to protect your Tribal community please visit the National Indian Health Board COVID-19 Tribal Resource Center.

Why are Elders at Higher Risk?

Older people are more likely to have serious COVID-19 illness if they contract the disease. This may be because immune systems change with age, making it harder to fight off diseases and infection.

Older adults also are more likely to have underlying health conditions, such as diabetes or high blood pressure, that make it harder to cope with and recover from illness.

What Can Tribal Elders do to Stay Healthy?

1. **Get vaccinated.** COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective ways to keep Elders healthy. American Indian and Alaska Natives can be vaccinated starting at 5 years old.

2. **If you are not fully vaccinated**, continue to **wear a mask or cloth face covering** to protect yourself, youth, and the community. Make sure to **stay 6 feet apart from people** you don’t live with and avoid crowds. You should **wash your hands often** with soap and water or use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not accessible.
If you feel sick or develop symptoms such as fever, cough or shortness of breath contact your IHS or Tribal healthcare provider immediately.

- Let a friend or family member know you are feeling sick.
- Keep track of your symptoms.
- Stay home, except to get health care. Avoid public areas.
- As much as possible stay away from other people. If you are not able to, wear a mask.

For more information, or to learn more about frequently asked questions, visit the CDC website:

Disclaimer: This fact sheet is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling $2,000,000 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

For more information, visit NIHB’s National Tribal COVID-19 Response page at www.nihb.org