

PREVENTING THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

A TOOLKIT FOR INSTITUTIONS CATERING TO PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY



In partnership with



INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 outbreak has presented a unique set of challenges for different segments of the population, especially for medical personnel and social welfare staff working at the frontlines of this global crisis.

Organisations working directly with members of vulnerable communities or with individuals who require special care face a set of challenges around social distancing and regular safety measures that are harder to combat. **Contact between caregivers and people with disabilities** is inevitable and many of these individuals are in need of constant care. People with certain kinds of disabilities are also at a higher risk of contracting the virus owing to compromised bodily functions. These are exacerbated by the fact that many of these institutions and facilities have low access to resources and may be located in areas that are poorly served by infrastructure and essential services.

This toolkit aims to provide basic guidelines on managing facilities that face issues of space constraints, lack of resources and are unable to adequately follow social distancing norms and offers low-cost alternatives to otherwise resource-intensive precautionary measures.

This toolkit was developed based on insights from Dr Ronnie Mohanty (Retd.), Group Captain, Indian Armed Forces, one of the key medical advisors for the SELCO Foundation COVID Response Task Force. This document also leverages on insights and 60 years of expertise of our partner Association of People with Disability, and specific guidance of Dr NS Senthil Kumar. Last but not the least, a special thank you to Mr Saibal Guha from Voices of the World (a 28-year-old organization based out of Kolkata, India) for sharing his administrative experience of running an institution with over 300 children with multiple disabilities and give his practical experience on implementation of these guidelines.

In case you want more information, we can help connect you with the right medical professionals or other institutions that are facing similar situations.



THIS TOOLKIT INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING:

- ➔ PERSONAL PROTECTIVE PRACTICES
- ➔ CLEANLINESS AND HYGIENE AMONG FACILITY OCCUPANTS
- ➔ CLEANING AND DISINFECTING YOUR FACILITY
- ➔ MANAGING DEVICES AND EQUIPMENT WHILE CARING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
- ➔ VISITORS AT THE FACILITY
- ➔ HOW TO SET UP AN ISOLATION WARD
- ➔ MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS DURING A LOCKDOWN
- ➔ USING A MASK THE RIGHT WAY
- ➔ HANDLING PRODUCE SAFELY
- ➔ USING HAND SANITIZERS EFFECTIVELY
- ➔ WASHING YOUR HANDS THE RIGHT WAY




PERSONAL PROTECTIVE PRACTICES



- Always wear a mask when going out, and make sure you do not touch your face or the mask with your hands. **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth** as our hands come in contact with surfaces and objects that may be contaminated and these organs become a pathway through which the virus can enter the throat or lungs.
- Hair is the primary source of infection. Doctors, health workers, caregivers and other front-line workers must **always keep their head covered with a cap or a dupatta** and wash their hair on a daily basis to protect themselves and avoid transmission.
- Wear full-sleeved shirts/ jacket/ socks when stepping out. Allocate the area near the exit for quick washing of hands, face and changing of clothes, before making any contact with your surroundings like a door handle, water bottles, or coming in contact with people at your facility.
- Do not wear contact lenses. It is preferable to wear spectacles instead as they prevent you from involuntarily touching your eyes and also acts as a protective shield. Clean your glasses every day with warm water and soap.
- Wash your hands frequently, and use your elbow to push open doors or press lift buttons in public spaces.
- Practice respiratory hygiene by **coughing or sneezing into a bent elbow**, in the absence of tissues that can be disposed of properly.



CLEANLINESS AND HYGIENE AMONG FACILITY OCCUPANTS

- **Enforce daily baths** and hand washing/ sanitizing. Keep handwashing supplies readily available and accessible.
- For individuals and occupants living in close quarters, encourage them to change clothes before entering their rooms. You can keep a bucket of hot water at the door in which individuals can drop their clothes and ensure they wear fresh clothes before bed.
-  Symptoms and temperature should be checked every morning for facility occupants (who may be children with disabilities, or adults needing care). **Keep an eye on diarrhoea and loss of smell, in addition to cough, cold and fever.**
- **Use a temperature gun** to check the temperature on a daily basis. A thermometer cannot be used since that itself might result in a transfer of the virus from one person to another.
- Restrict the number of staff who go out or engage with people in the external world. Take additional precautions with staff who cannot avoid engaging with the outside world.

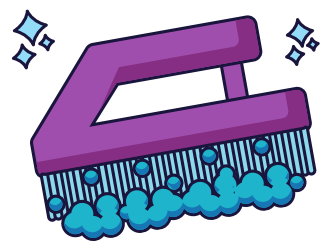


CLEANING AND DISINFECTING YOUR FACILITY

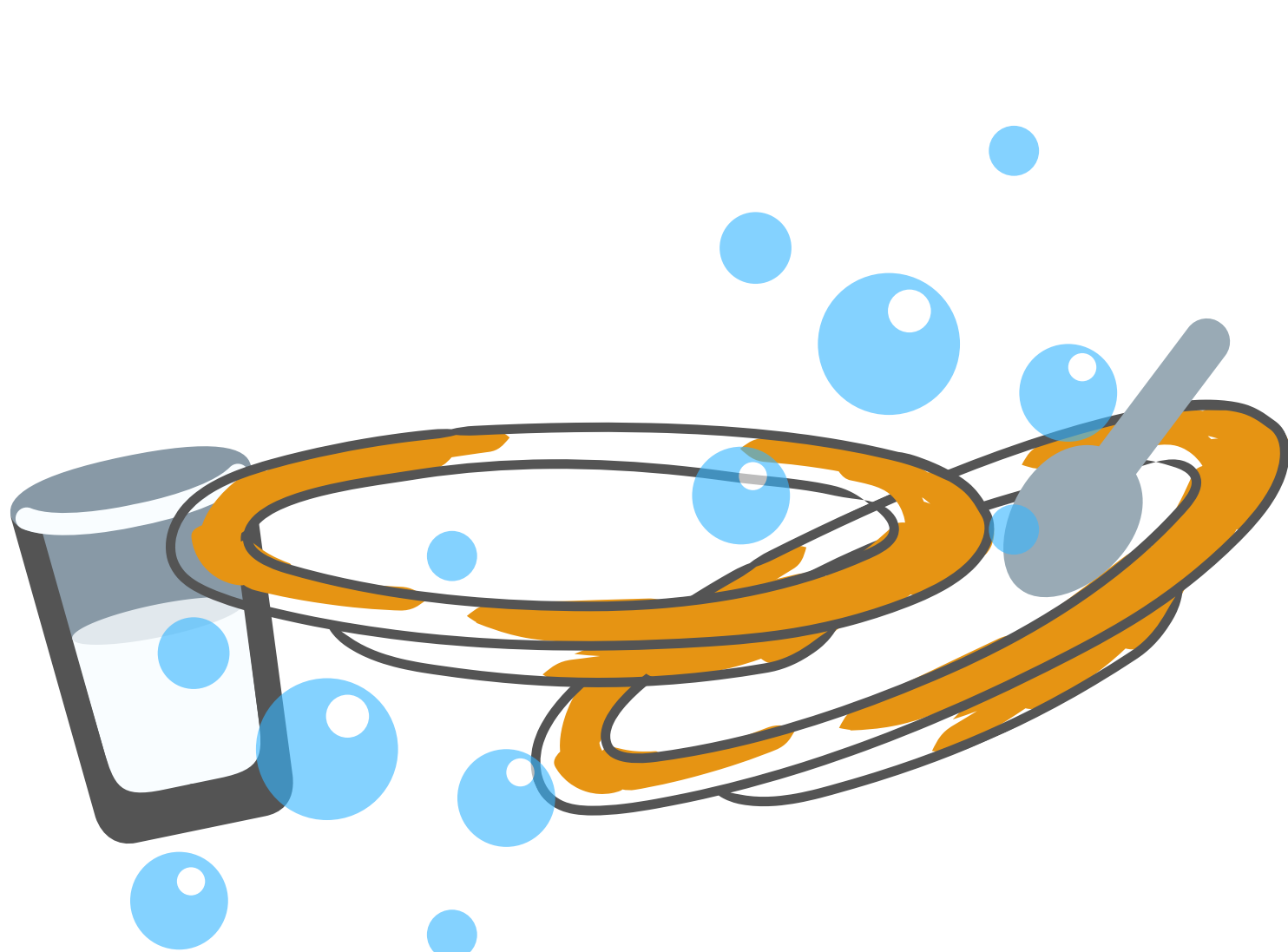
- Spray your surroundings with disinfectants regularly, especially areas where more than 3 people assemble. **Use disinfectants such as Lizol or Dettol diluted in water to clean common areas, kitchen and surfaces that are frequently touched, including shared desks, countertops, doorknobs. Use Phenyl only to sanitize floors and toilets**
- Install makeshift hand-washing stations in your premises, and make sure that soap is available at every washbasin.
- Identify and designate one or two individuals to be the point of contact with the outside world, and ensure that all other staff and occupants remain within the premises.
- **Ensure that those designated individuals carefully follow decontamination procedures each time they step out and re-enter the facility.** Sanitize the bags properly. Each item brought into the facility from outside should be washed and kept wherever there is direct sunlight.
- Avoid using air conditioners since its use does not allow for adequate air circulation and easy transfer of infection from one individual to another. Open the windows and ensure adequate air circulation and ventilation.
- Air-dry the clothes, bed linen, bathroom towels after washing, in the sun for at least four hours. Consider washing clothes more often.



MANAGING DEVICES AND EQUIPMENT WHILE CARING FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

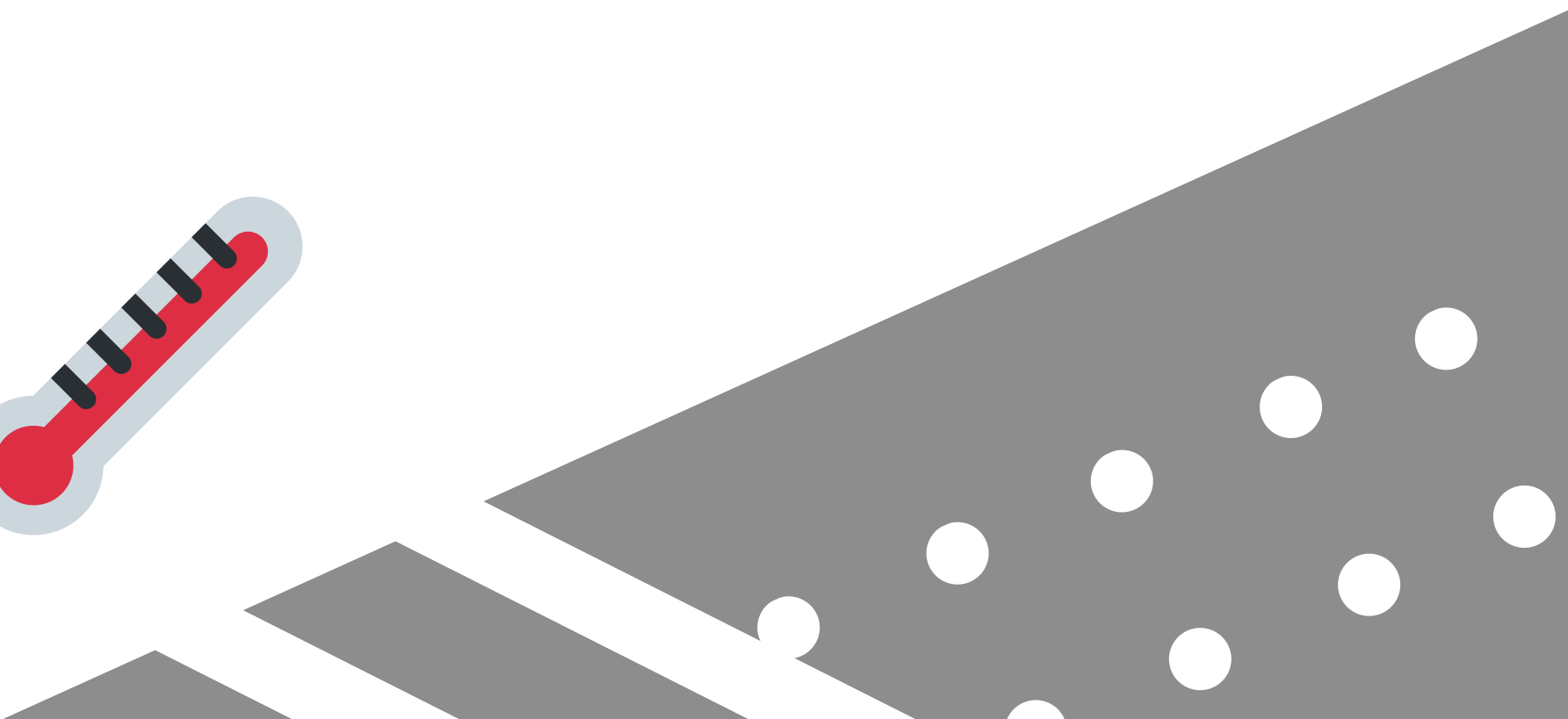
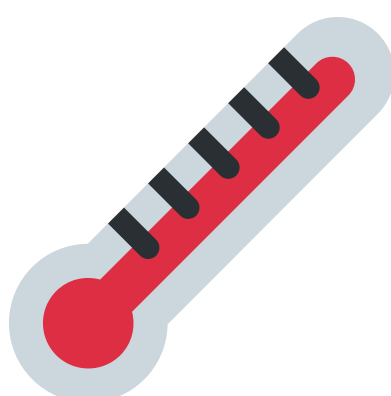
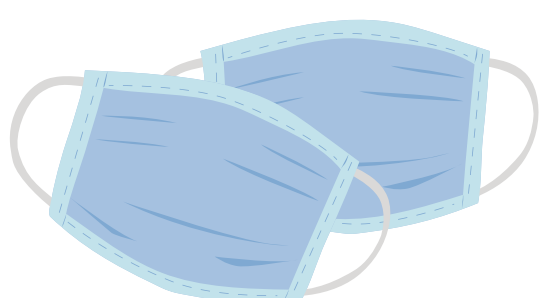
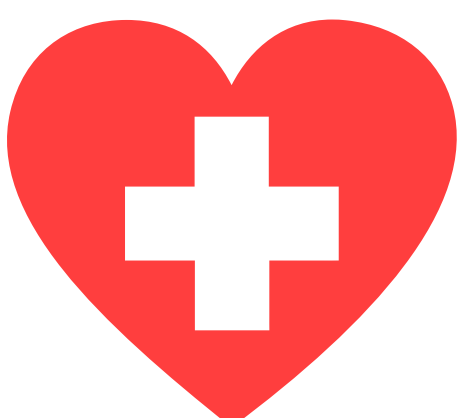


- **Disallow sharing of personal items** such as mobile phones, books, laptops, toys, stationery etc to avoid spread through contaminated surfaces.
- Use a damp cloth and soap to clean mobility aids such as walking sticks, canes, walkers as well as prosthetic devices.
- Sanitize the wheelchair regularly, including the wheel axle, using a damp cloth soaked in a strong detergent.
- Wipe down hearing aids and earmolds with a cloth, disposable tissue, or designated hearing aid wipe soaked in disinfectant spray.
- **Keep utensils such as dishes, spoons, tumblers, and bowls separate** for each person and ensure the dishes are washed thoroughly in hot water with dishwashing soap.



HOW TO SET UP AN ISOLATION WARD

- Isolation refers to the separation of individuals who are ill and suspected or confirmed of COVID-19
- **Choose a segregated area which is not frequented by outsiders.** Pick a room/ location for isolation that is well-ventilated.
- Post clear signages on the door indicating that space is an isolation area.
- House all COVID-19 patients in single rooms. However, if sufficient single rooms are not available, beds could be put with a spatial separation of at least 1 meter (3 feet) and preferably 2 meters from one another.
- Remove all non-essential furniture and ensure that the remaining furniture is easy to clean, and does not conceal or retain dirt or moisture within or around it.
- **Keep the patient's personal belongings to a minimum. Keep water pitchers and cups, tissue wipes, and all items necessary for attending to personal hygiene within the patient's reach.**
- Ensure that appropriate hand washing facilities and hand-hygiene supplies are available.
- Restrict all visitors to the isolation facility, only caregivers wearing proper PPE should be allowed to enter the isolation ward.



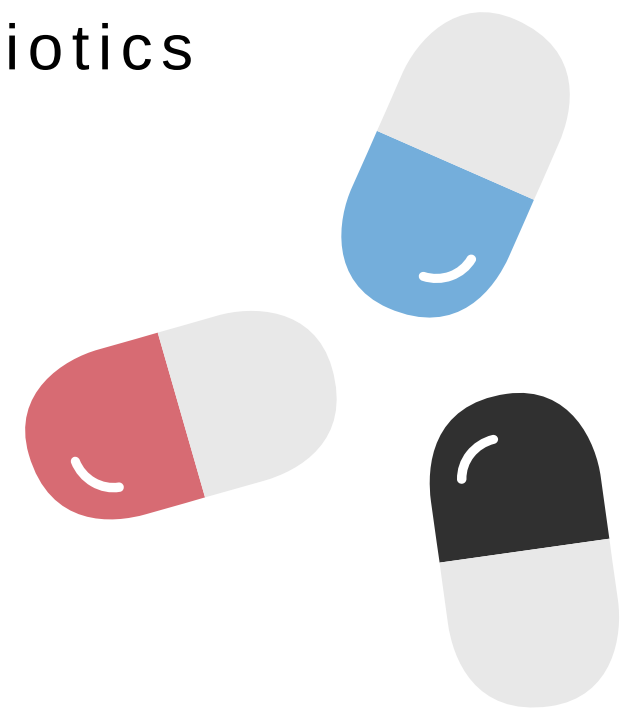
...SETTING UP AN ISOLATION WARD

- In case the institution cannot create an isolation ward, govt facilities can also be used.
- **Mobiles phones, books, or any other objects used by the persons in isolation should not be shared with any other occupants or caregivers of the facility.**
- Minimise the contact with the person in isolation. If they are able to take care of themselves, leave the food at the door and collect the empty vessels later.
- Use separate vessels and dishes for the persons in isolation.
- Use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when caring for immobile persons. Protective equipment consists primarily of masks, goggles, gloves and gowns. Shield your face and keep yourself fully covered.
- Decontaminate the protective equipment before and after using it. Wash the gown, headgear and gloves thoroughly, spray the sanitiser on the mask and keep all the equipment in the sun for a minimum of four hours. Perform hand hygiene immediately after removing gloves.



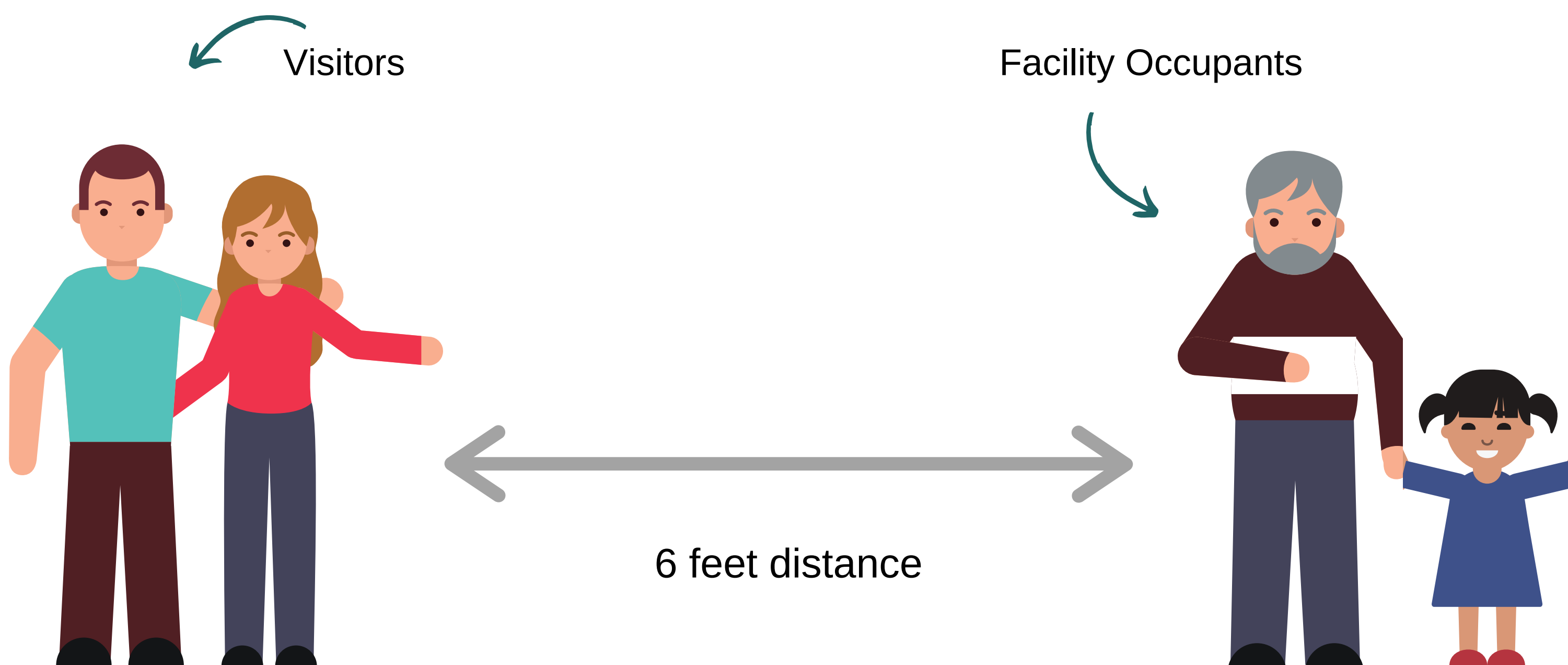
MEDICAL PREPAREDNESS DURING A LOCKDOWN

- Make a list of your prescribed medicines and refill them.
- Source masks from a pharmacy if possible or contact your local tailor to make low-cost handmade masks (check and follow the guidelines for making masks at home)
- Keep a few strips of Cetirizine, an anti-allergy medication that you can buy over-the-counter at a pharmacy. Buy cough syrups and Cold and Flu medicines
- Make sure your first aid box contains:
 - Sterile gauze pads (dressings) in small and large squares to place over wounds
 - Disinfectants like or
 - Medicines like pain killers (ibuprofen) and antibiotics
 - Roller bandages to hold dressings in place
 - Adhesive tape
 - Adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
 - Scissors
 - Tweezers
 - Safety pins
 - Antiseptic wipes or soap
 - Temperature gun
 - Barrier devices, such as a pocket mask or face shield
 - Emergency telephone numbers for emergency medical services (EMS) 1092/102/10805
- **Do not use a thermometer. Use a temperature gun.** If you are using a thermometer, take armpit temperature only and sterilise it with Dettol before and after using it on every person.



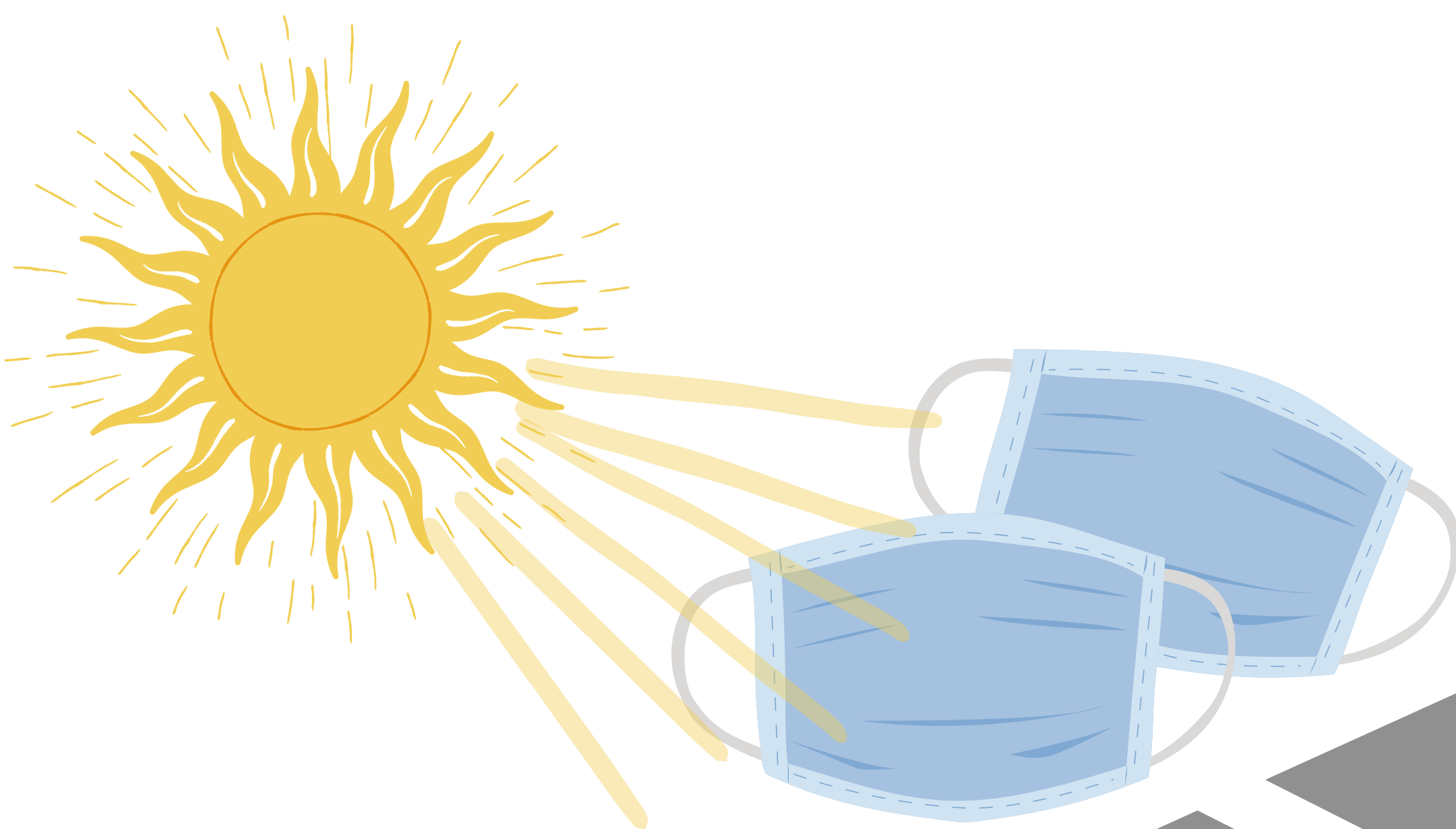
VISITORS AT THE FACILITY

- Allocate an area near the entrance for visitors to leave their handbags or belongings before entering
- Set up a small makeshift washbasin at the entrance with soap and make sure the visitors wash their hands and face thoroughly
- Restrict their movement within the facility premises, disallow any direct physical contact with facility occupants and ensure that a minimum of 1-3 meters distance is maintained.
- **Avoid allowing items or food from outside being brought in by visitors.** And in unavoidable circumstances, strictly ensure that all such items are properly disinfected as soon as they are brought in.



USING A MASK THE RIGHT WAY

- Clean your hands thoroughly before putting on a mask. Use an alcohol-based sanitiser or simply wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Cover your mouth and nose with the mask, pinch the metal rim (respirator N95 mask) around your nose so it sits comfortably and compactly.
- Make sure there is no gap between your face and the mask.
- When removing it, the outside of the mask should not touch your face, hands or any other object. Use the ear loops (string-like material) or the rubber bands in case of an N95 mask to remove the mask.
- Replace the mask with a new one once it is damp and soiled
- If it isn't possible to dispose of the mask after each use, **you can sanitize the masks by spraying it with a sanitizer and keeping it in the sun for four hours.** Repeat this exercise twice before reusing a mask. Each person should keep two masks at one time because the sterilisation exercise takes time.



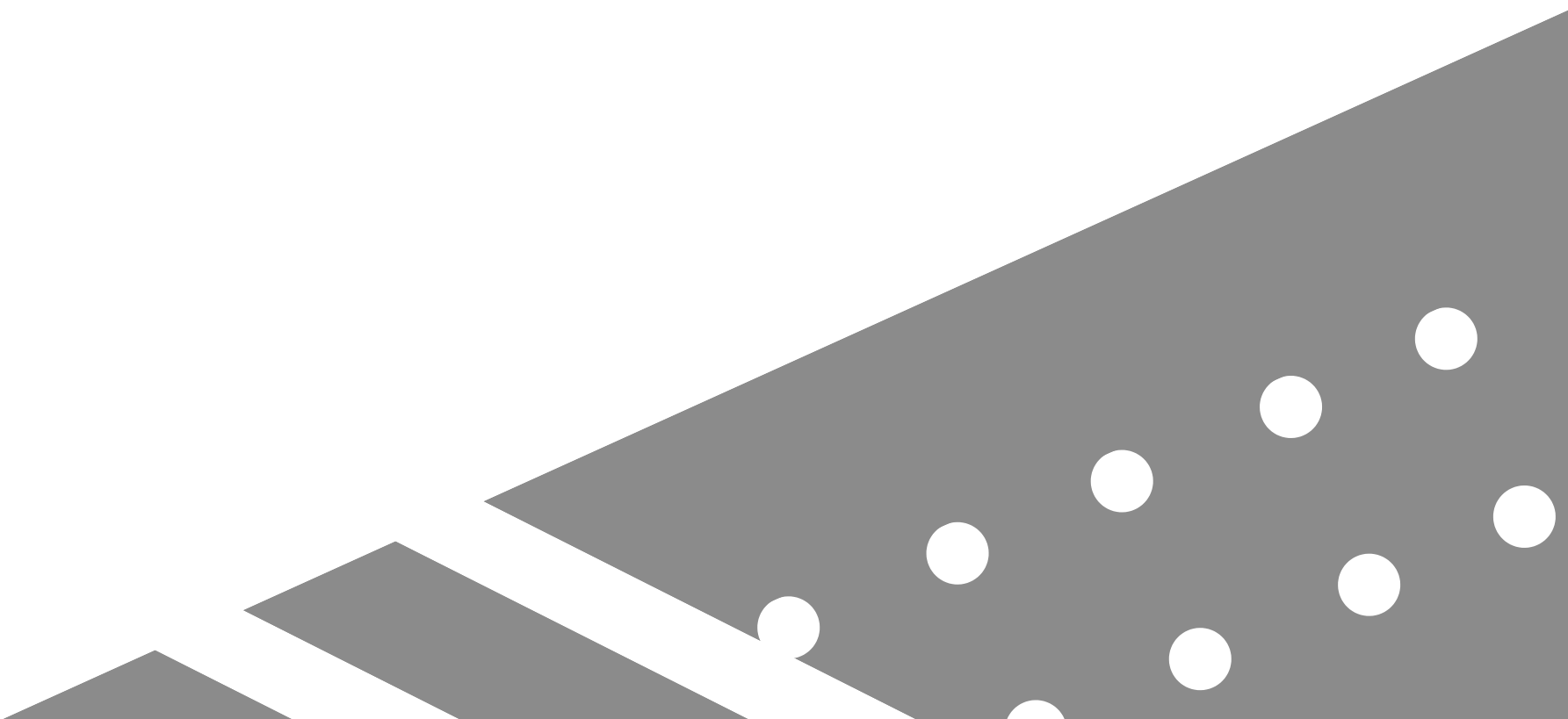
HANDLING PRODUCE SAFELY

- Use a plastic bag to collect the food items being delivered to your doorstep. Dispose of the bag or sanitise it before reusing it.
- Maintain at least 1.5 meter distance between yourself and the delivery personnel.
- Avoid having long conversations because people generate micro-droplets when they're talking loudly.
- Dump the produce in a bucket of hot water as soon as you collect it (not boiling water as that may spoil the vegetables and fruits!)
- Consider adding a pinch of magnesium permanganate to the water., allow it to soak for an hour
- **Buy non-perishable food items in bulk**, like dal, rice, atta, biscuits etc. so that one doesn't need to visit the market/ grocery shop often.
- **Always wash hands thoroughly before and after handling raw food, including vegetables.** Wash grains and rice thoroughly before use and cook them well



USING HAND SANITIZERS EFFECTIVELY

- **Handwashing should always be your #1 choice**, but hand sanitizers are a good alternative when you don't have access to soap and water.
- Make sure you are using an Alcohol rub sanitizer containing at least 70% alcohol, you can check this by reading its composition at the back of the bottle.
- Apply a dollop the size of a coin, and rub palm to palm.
- Rub it over the front and back of your hand and between your fingers.
- Let it air dry



OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES

https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/3Pocketbookof5_Covid19_27March.pdf

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/index.html>

https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Corona_comic_PGI.pdf

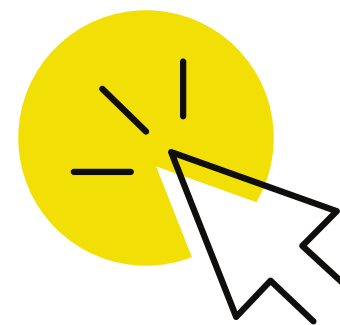
<https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/LeafletGHFandDHGA.pdf>

https://www.mohfw.gov.in/pdf/Poster_Corona_ad_Eng.pdf



To know more about our other Covid19 Initiatives,
visit www.selcofoundation.org/responding_to_covid-19/

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