INFECTION CONTROL IN COVID-19
WHAT THE CAREGIVER NEEDS TO KNOW

BASIC HYGIENE PRACTICES

1. **If the patient is coughing, the caregiver must wear a 3-layer mask for protection.** These are masks that are either:
   - Surgical masks made up of special material to protect against droplets such as the blue medical/surgical masks worn by healthcare professionals.
   - Cloth masks made up of three layers of fabric.

2. **The patient must cover their mouth and nose with a disposable paper tissue when coughing or sneezing or cough or sneeze into their elbow.** If tissues are not available, the patient can use a cloth or other materials, but these materials used to cover the mouth and nose should be discarded into a closed plastic lined bin which is cleaned with soap and warm water when the refuse is removed.

3. **Avoid direct contact with body fluids, particularly oral or respiratory secretions, and stool.** Wash hands and wear a mask when providing care and when handling stool, urine, and other waste.

   - The caregiver should wear a mask at all times while working with the patient. 3-layer cloth mask acceptable, but should be washed and ironed daily. It may help to have two masks so while one is in the wash the other can be used.

   - **PUTTING ON YOUR MASK**
     - Place the mask on carefully, ensuring it covers the MOUTH and NOSE, and tie it securely to minimize any gaps between the face and the mask.
     - **REMOVING YOUR MASK**
     - Remove the mask without touching the front. Discard the mask immediately after use and perform hand hygiene.

   - **SAFE STORAGE**
     - If you are going to be using the mask again in the same day, you can take it off carefully WITHOUT touching the front of the mask and place it in a brown bag, Ziploc packet or plastic container (Tupperware) to keep it from touching other surfaces and spreading the virus.
     - If the patient is not too breathless, encourage the wearing of a mask while the caregiver is in the room.

   - **WASHING YOUR CLOTH MASK**
     - Cloth masks can be washed at the end of each day and re-used the next day. Wash in hot water (60-90 degrees best) with soap, rinse and let dry (in the sun if possible).

   - **KEEP SAFE**
     - Do not touch the outside of the mask while wearing it.
     - If the mask is touched, hands need to be sanitized.
     - Perform hand hygiene before and after removing the mask.
     - Replace masks as soon as they become damp, with a new clean, dry mask.

   - If possible, iron the mask and it can then be re-used.