THE
COVID-19
CHRONICLES

Note: “The COVID-19 Chronicles” (or any part of them) cannot be modified or edited in any way and they are not to be used for commercial purposes.
THE COVID-19 CHRONICLES

"TO MASK OR NOT TO MASK?"

There's a virus going around.

How come you're not wearing a mask?

We don't need a mask if we're well. Trust me.

Why?

Are you some kind of expert?

You could say that.

Well, I feel fine. So there's really no need to.

But, if I had a fever, cough or flu-symptoms, I'd definitely wear one to protect others.

For the general public not working in a high risk setting, wear a mask only if you are unwell.

Dr Dale Fisher is Professor in Infectious Disease, NUS, and Chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, hosted by WHO.
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"UNIFORM BLUES"

So many safety procedures nowadays...
Yeah. N95 masks, gowns, face shields and gloves... Very strict now.

OK. Must remove in the right order. Gloves first. Then face shield. Then cap.
Then gown. Then foot coverings. Always inside out.
Then, very carefully remove mask straps without touching the mask.
Lastly, wash hands thoroughly.

Well, it's important that people around us are completely safe.

They go out for lunch...

NURSES! Aiieee!

Healthcare staff observe strict hygiene protocols. Don't be afraid of them. Instead, show them appreciation.

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"FLU GO WHERE?"

KOFF KOFF KOFF

Dad! Go see a doctor. You are coughing.

Aiyah! No need, lah!
It's just a cough. I'll just stay home and rest.

KOFF KOFF KOFF

PHPCs* and polyclinics are giving 5 days of MC and charging only $10 for those diagnosed with respiratory symptoms!

And $5 for Pioneer or Merdeka Generation!

I'm going out. Will be back before lunch.

COVID-19 is probably at its most infective in the early stages. See a doctor early to protect those around you.

Wear a mask and practice good hygiene on your way there.

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* Public Health Preparedness Clinics — specially-designated GP clinics that provide subsidised care for respiratory illnesses; previously activated to deal with haze and H1N1.
Disposable masks must be changed when they become wet.

Ahchoo! Ahchoo! Ahchoo!

No need, lah!

They shouldn’t be reused because they trap harmful particles inside their mesh of fibres.

This hazardous build-up cannot be cleaned out without damaging the fibres or other parts of the mask, like...

Just clean it out with a disinfectant. Then reuse!

Ahchoo!!

Never wash or disinfect disposable masks. Discard them if they are wet.

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“AIRBORNE FEARS”

Better safe than sorry.

Yo.

A GAS MASK?!! It’s not a war!

An N95 mask?!! Isn’t that too much?

Nope. The virus could be airborne in this office.

It IS a war! Against the virus!

And I get to look cool at the same time!

Crazy! Wait till the boss sees you guys.

Sorry I’m late.

COVID-19 is nearly always spread through droplets and close contact. Don’t act out of fear and don’t put on more protective gear than required.

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“NO HOARDING NEEDED”

At the supermarket...

OH! They have stock!

Back home...

Dear! They had stock!

And we got them all!!

I SAID HAND SANITISER!
NOT HAND LOTION!!

Hand hygiene is important but there’s no need to hoard hand sanitisers. Washing hands regularly with soap and water is good enough.

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“SCAREDY-CAT”

AW... So cute.
I think he likes me.

Don’t touch it!
Stray cats and dogs can spread the virus!

I dunno
I heard it somewhere! So please put down the-

Who told you that?

There’s no evidence that stray cats and dogs can spread the virus.

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"Mouthwash and Other Myths"

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First, it was rubbing yourself with my sesame oil. Look at our bed!

Then, you say eating lots of garlic will protect you. Then -

But these things can!

WHO says they can't!

Yeah, who?

No! I mean W-H-O! Yes!! Who?!!

Garr! OK! Just use your mouthwash! You eat so much garlic!

Mouth so smelly!

I love garlic. But I will never use it to treat or prevent an infection. There's no evidence that eating garlic, using mouthwash and putting on sesame oil can protect us from the virus.

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WHO = World Health Organization
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“DON’T OPEN IN CASE OF VIRUS”

Gloves on.

Make incision. Steady. Careful now.

Finally! My dress from overseas is here!

So, how’re you going to wear it now?

The virus causing COVID-19 can only survive a few days in the environment. Your parcels are extremely unlikely to be contaminated. If in doubt, simply wash your hands after opening and disposing of the wrapping.

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"DON'T FORGET TO DISINFECT"

Yes mum, I'm very careful.

Yes. I wash my hands after pressing elevator buttons and opening doors.

Even the coins in my pocket!

Ya! Ya! Stop worrying... I got it all covered already!

What? What about my phone?

COVID-19 can be spread by contact with contaminated surfaces. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub, and keep your personal items clean.

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“OUR DUTY OUR CALLING”

My name is Dr Shoban Kumar. I lead a team of medical officers caring for COVID-19 patients at an isolation ward in NUH.

At this time, extra help is needed, so...

All our leave has to be postponed. I'll cancel my wedding photoshoot. I'll cancel my family trip to Austria.

My wife is due in three months. I wish I could spend more time with her.

Sorry. I'll be late again today.

But somehow, we don't see these as sacrifices. This is just our professional duty and calling—to help others.

Healthcare workers such as those in Dr Kumar's team see sacrifices in times like this as part of their core duties. Their priority is making sure your loved ones are in good hands.

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*National University Hospital
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“SECOND FAMILY”

Our patients at the isolation ward are away from their loved ones for a long time.

Until they recover, we are there to encourage them.

It's my fault... I put people around me at risk.

We try to connect with them on a more personal level.

Nobody wanted this to happen. Don't feel guilty about it.

Uncle, Kopi-c Kosong from the coffeeshop below.

We spend time sharing our lives with them and become their second family.

We Beyond the immediate medical needs, our doctors and nurses provide emotional support to make COVID-19 patients feel more comfortable while being away from their family and friends.

*Usually 14-18 days. Or until there are 2 negative swabs.

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"Handshake Alternatives"

The "wave"

The Thai "wai"

The "elbow"

The "footshake"

By avoiding handshakes, you can lower the risk of getting infected. So adopt alternative greetings instead. What other alternatives can you think of?

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"DON'T DOCTOR-HOP"

A few days later...

KOFF KOFF

That doctor's medicine isn't working.

KOFF KOFF

I'll try another doctor instead.

KOFF KOFF

If she comes back and it is worse, she may need to go to the hospital.

KOFF KOFF

If she had returned to her first doctor, she would have already been referred to the hospital. But instead...

KOFF KOFF KOFF

If you doctor-hop, your diagnosis may be delayed, increasing the risk of spreading the disease to others.

Dr Dale Fisher is Professor in Infectious Disease, NUS, and Chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, WHO.
The mall with our favourite restaurant!

OH! That's...

Awesome! For once, there's no queue!

Woohoo!

And this place is now cleaner than other places because they have done a thorough wipe-down!

Good thinking!

It's safe to visit places with confirmed cases of COVID-19 as they would have been thoroughly disinfected before re-opening to the public.

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"KEEP HANDS AWAY"

If the virus were on those things, it can get into your body when you rub your eyes.

Now my nose is itchy! I need to scratch!

Don't touch any part of your face yet!

OK. Your hands are clean! It's safe! Rub, scratch, touch all you want now. Quick!

...But it's not itchy anymore.

Now wash your hands! More soap! Sing "Happy Birthday" twice!

Happy Birthday to you! Happy Birthday to you... 🎉

Sing slower! Rub between your fingers! Do it properly!

Keep your hands away from your face. If you need to touch it, first wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub.

Dr Dale Fisher is Professor in Infectious Disease, NUS, and Chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, WHO.
Hi Honey, I’m home! It’s been a long day dealing with fever patients at EMD.*

Wish I had time to plan what to cook for dinner. It would be nice to cook something special for everyone.

*Emergency Medicine Department

Honey! You prepared all my favourite dishes!!!

This COVID-19 split team arrangement and working from home is something new for me. I’m still trying to adapt. Looking forward to a great dinner...

MEOWN (me too!) MAMA!

You’ve had a hard day, you should take it easy tonight.

As we stand together in the fight against COVID-19, let’s wish the women in our lives a Happy International Women’s Day. You make things work!

Professor Chong Yap Seng is a women’s health specialist and Dean of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.
THE COVID-19 CHRONICLES
“MOMMIES, DON’T WORRY”

I’m hungry! Let’s go find that chicken rice you have a craving for!

No, I lost my appetite.

Oh? How come?

With this virus around, I’m so worried about our baby. I’m afraid to go anywhere now.

What if I get infected and it affects the baby too?

Here’s some tissue paper. Let’s see what the experts say online.

They said that so far, there’s no evidence that infected mothers will pass on the virus to their foetuses or become more seriously ill.

Sniff

Thanks. I think I got my craving back.

Yes! Chicken rice, here I come!!

But I want to eat French fries now.

Where COVID-19 is concerned, there is no need for pregnant women to be especially afraid for their babies or themselves. They should take normal precautions like practising good hand hygiene and avoiding close contact with people who are unwell.

Dr Dale Fisher is Professor in Infectious Disease, NUS, and Chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, WHO.
The girls want to meet tonight? Ooh! I’ve been wanting to visit that restaurant! Do I want to go? Um...

You’re recovering from flu! Don’t go! But it’s going to be sooo much fun! Don’t miss out!!

Think of your friends! If you have the virus, all of them might get infected!

Hiyaa!

Um... Y...

Y’know... because I love you all, I’ll join another time when I’ve fully recovered, ok?

Be socially responsible. Don’t go out if you have a cold or flu. Do your part to fight COVID-19!

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Let hospitals attend to the serious cases first. If you have mild flu symptoms and have no recent travel or contact with COVID-19 cases, wear a mask, visit your usual GP and rest at home.

Dr Dale Fisher is Professor in Infectious Disease, NUS, and Chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, WHO.
OK, I've got medical leave for mild flu symptoms. But I should still go to work because I'm...

...so responsible! You came even when unwell!

Knowing we were already so busy, you didn't want us to have to cover for you!

You are a model employee. No medical leave taken!

You're so thoughtful!

I'm promoting you!

Hi guys! I came to work even though I'm sick!

My gosh! That's irresponsible!

I can't promote such an employee.

You didn't think of us!

When you're on medical leave, stay at home and do not go to work even if your flu symptoms are mild. This is being socially responsible and helps to prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you're infected with it.

Dr Dale Fisher is Professor in Infectious Disease, NUS, and Chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, WHO.
Come greet your dad. He's just been discharged from the isolation ward.

EEKK!!

There's no need to fear! I'm fully recovered and no longer transmit the virus!

I had to undergo these PCR* tests where they swab me every 24 hours!

The tests will detect the virus in my samples.

My last two swabs were negative!

I'm safe! Please don't be scared!

I'm not scared of you, Dad! There's a cockroach!

EEKK!!

Discharged COVID-19 patients in Singapore have fully recovered and do not transmit the virus. They are not a threat to the community.

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* Polymerase Chain Reaction tests
Hi Grandma! I wish I could visit you today. But I'm having a mild flu. So I'm staying home. I hope that's OK.

I think that's very thoughtful of you, dear. Older folks like me... can get very ill if we catch the virus.

Yeah, Grandma. So I'm calling to say I love you so much. And you mean the world to me. So for now, let's chat online like this every day, ok?

I'd like that very much.

If you're unwell with flu symptoms, postpone visits to your grandparents and elderly parents. Instead, meet them online or give them a call to assure them that they are loved.

Dr David Heymann, CBE, is Professor of Infectious Disease Epidemiology at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, and a Distinguished Fellow in the Global Health programme, Chatham House.

* Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.
THE COVID-19 CHRONICLES
"NEIGHBOURHOOD HEROES"

Oh dear... I'm running low on groceries and medicine. I'm worried about going out. And I have no one to help me.

DING DONG!

Yes?

Hi! We're your friendly neighbourhood super team!

I'm Driver Mom. And my kids are...

Help-Buy Your Groceries Boy!

Get-Your-Medicine Girl!

We wash our hands and we're here to help!

Ooh...

And I'm... I'm Super-Grateful Granny!

To minimise the elderly's potential exposure to the virus, you can help them to run errands and stock up on medicine and supplies. But remember to do so only if you're well.

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Get ready for 7 new patients arriving today.

You’ll need 2 negative swabs to be discharged.

Stay strong.

Let’s do a quick lunch break then get back to work. OK, I’m famished!

The silent army of housekeepers, porters, security and kitchen staff working in the background keep the environment clean and safe for everyone. They are our unsung heroes.

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“LOW RISK ISN’T NO RISK”

GOARN 2020
Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network

Yo! I’m here! Let the party begin!

Hey! You should be serving your stay home notice!

Yeah.

Whatever!! Don’t tell me you’re scared of a silly virus?
C’mon! It’s only the elderly who need to worry! Not us, bro!

But young people DO get infected!

Yeah, so what if we do? Read the news! Young people usually recover!

I guess that’s true...

Relax! Let’s party!

A few days later...

I don’t feel well.

Bro. All of us now have symptoms too.
And my parents are in critical condition. I’m so scared.

Even if you are not elderly, you can still get sick with COVID-19 and spread it to others who can get seriously ill. Please consider the consequences of your actions.

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"SAFE DISTANCING"

GOARN 2020 YEARS

Troops! I'll see you on the other side!

Get ready to infect in 3-2-1-

Rats! We missed our target! The humans are too far apart!

Keeping a safe distance of at least 1m away from the next person will help minimise the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

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“STAY-HOME NOTICE”

We use different toilets.

I’m careful to flush. We disinfect door knobs, and wash our hands often.

Oh dear. That sounds terrible!

Yeah... But it means I hear a LOT less nagging too.

Oh yeah, I can’t leave my house. And no visitors. But my family can still stay with me. We just keep a safe distance from each other.

Mealtimes, we eat separately.

I just have a LOT less interaction with my parents.

When under stay-home notice, you can continue to share the same residence with others. But you are encouraged to take steps to reduce interaction and minimise contact with them.

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"TO GO OUT OR NOT?"

So supposing a guy asks you out. He’s handsome, crazy rich, and drives a cool car. But he’s dishonest, lazy, and mean to people. Would you go out with him?

No, Mum.

Good!

Now, what if the guy is NOT good-looking, NOT very rich and doesn’t have a car...

But he’s honest, hardworking, kindhearted, and very intelligent. Would you go out with him?

No, as well.

huh? why not?

Because we can’t tell who may be carrying the virus out there, it’s best not to go out unnecessarily until the situation improves.

So now I’m gonna virtual chat with this cute, rich, kind and smart guy I met online!

COVID-19 can be spread by people before their symptoms are obvious. Please stay at home as much as possible and minimise physical contact with others during this time. We should do this for the good of everyone.

Dr Dale Fisher is Professor in Infectious Disease, NUS, and Chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, WHO.
The cinemas are closed. And we can’t dine in at restaurants. So to celebrate our first month of dating, how about we buy takeaway, go over to your place and watch a movie online?

That sounds great, babe. But, sorry. At this time, it’s best to avoid meeting up and take social distancing seriously.

This is to protect you and your family. And because I love you so much.

You’re right, babe.

So would you be OK with a simple online date over the phone, while we eat our own takeaway food, and watch the same movie on our laptops?

OK. But only if we both wear fancy clothes. And no home-clothes-below-the-waist trick!

You know me too well. You got it!

understanding ☑️ flexible ☑️ creative ☑️ socially responsible ☑️ She’s the one!

We need everyone to follow the stricter safe-distancing measures the Government has introduced to help curb the spread of COVID-19. Together, let’s do our part to protect everyone’s health.

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“TraceTogether”

Mr. Tan, now that we’ve confirmed you have COVID-19, a contact tracing team will get in touch with you.

They will need to know who you’ve met and where you’ve been the past 2 weeks.

The past 2 weeks? I don’t even remember what I ate 2 days ago!

Let’s see... I had drinks with George last week... Or was it Gerald? Or Gary?

Oh no it’s all mixed up! I meet so many people!

That’s perfect! You’re brilliant!

If only this app could tell me this cute doctor’s number too. But it can’t. Sigh...

Now the team can contact them quickly so they can isolate themselves and protect others!

Oh wait! I downloaded TraceTogether 3 weeks ago! It uses Bluetooth to keep a record of everyone* I’ve had close contact with!

Contact tracing helps to prevent further transmission of COVID-19. Do your part by downloading the TraceTogether app, and encourage your family and friends to do so too.

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* Everyone who has the app downloaded and running, with Bluetooth turned on.
Please stay home for now, so our business can open again soon.

Please stay home for now. So I can go to restaurants and the movies with my Smoochie-poo again soon.

Yes, please stay at home just for now,... so our grandkids can come visit us again. We miss hugging them!

Please stay home... wait, I'm talking... so... hold on, dear... So my kids can go back to school.

If all of us play our part in following the 'circuit breaker' measures, we can expect some of the restrictions to ease. But if we refuse to comply, and more cases appear, these restrictions may extend, tighten or even increase.

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"DON'T SPREAD FALSE INFORMATION"

Did you know that sunbathing for 2 hours a day can protect you against COVID-19? Better go out now while there is still sun!

Mom, I'm in the middle of a class.

Auntie, where are you getting this information from?

You'd better tell your classmates to mask up when they go out, otherwise they'll get fined $20,000.

Mom, OMG!

Oh, my friends and I share the latest information with one another on our chat groups.

Auntie, if you keep spreading fake news, you might be the one getting fined instead!

Misinformation can cause unnecessary alarm. We should not speculate or spread unfounded rumours. Stick to trusted information sources such as the websites of national agencies* and the WHO.**

Dr Dale Fisher is Professor in Infectious Disease, NUS, and Chair of the Global Outbreak Alert and Response Network, WHO.

*moh.gov.sg/covid-19  **who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019
THE COVID-19 CHRONICLES

“SG COVID-19 SYMPTOM CHECKER”

GOARN 2020

There are so many new cases of COVID-19 every day. Could I have the virus too?

Pa, stop worrying. You’ve not been out anywhere.

But my stomach really hurts. I need to see a doctor now!

Pa, don’t panic. Use the COVID-19 symptom checker first.

Phew! It says “Stay home and self-monitor for 2-3 days.” It doesn’t think I have COVID-19!

You must be having your usual heartburn again.

Pa, are you eating too many glutinous rice dumplings again?

What makes you think that?

I’m gonna tell Mom!

Use the online COVID-19 symptom checker if you are unsure of being infected.

The quick self-check will help you to avoid unnecessary visits to the GP or Emergency Medicine Department.

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*sgcovidcheck.gov.sg/*
THE COVID-19 CHRONICLES

"OPERATION DORMITORIES"

GOARN 2020 YEARS

It's spreading fast in the dormitories. We need help here...

Of course! We'll send a mobile healthcare team down immediately.

We need to start screening quickly...

Thank you for volunteering on such short notice.

I'm glad to be of help.

Things have become so much easier with this new translation website!

Don't worry, just relax. I'll be done soon.

That was exhausting! Team A didn't even get to have dinner. But we finished 2 blocks today!

Better go home and get some rest. 4 more blocks tomorrow.

I'll be here.

We thank our healthcare workers for stepping up so selflessly and courageously to extend healthcare support to the dormitories. Your work contributes to breaking the cycle of infection and containing the outbreaks.

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* Dr Sudeshna Roy Chowdhury (NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine Class of 2020) built a website overnight for Bengali translations: tinyurl.com/covidbengali
As we stay home during the 'circuit breaker' period, don’t forget to maintain a balanced diet and remain physically active. Stay home. Keep well.

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**THE COVID-19 CHRONICLES**

**“KEEPING OUR SPIRITS UP”**

I take 20 minutes a day listening to something blissful.

I’m next!

We do late night chat sessions with friends after our kids are asleep. BYOB!

At the end of each day, I shut off all worrisome news and read something that will put me in a positive meow.

We may face stress, anxiety and worry amid the COVID-19 uncertainty. Keep your spirits up and stay connected with your family and friends. Stay home. Stay well.

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“THANK YOU, TEACHERS AND PARTNERS”

Hi Mdm Tan, thanks for being our SP* today! The exam will start soon, you’ll play the role of a patient who sprained her ankle. Remember our training session?

No problem! I’ve sprained my ankle before, so this will be easy. Even my daughter fell for my acting!

Great! Let’s head to the test room!

ouch! So painful! My ankle!!

Does it hurt here?

I thought we were using SPs for exams!

Mdm Tan’s screams were loud! I hope I didn’t hurt her. Otherwise, I think that went well. Fingers crossed that I’ll pass and can join the teams at the front line soon!

Exam in progress

Where are you going? It’s a Sunday, we’ve hardly seen you all week!

Sorry dear, I’ll try to be back by dinner!

The final year exams are on this weekend and I’m one of the examiners. We need our students to do well and pass. We need more doctors to help fight COVID-19.

COVID-19 is difficult for all of us but we must carry on. Thank you, our teaching partners, for helping to teach and train tomorrow’s doctors during this challenging period.

Professor Chong Yap Seng is a women’s health specialist and Dean of the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine.

*Standardised Patient
THE COVID-19 CHRONICLES

“PROTECT OTHERS”

GOARN 2020 YEARS

Just like superheroes who wear visors to protect the innocent from their deadly eye beams...

And snow queens who wear gloves to protect people from their icy powers...

And phantoms who wear masks to protect others from what lies beneath...

...we wear masks and keep a safe distance to protect others.

Wearing a mask helps to protect others should you have the virus and are unaware of it. Also remember to protect yourself with good hand hygiene and by staying home as much as possible.

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