

RADIO EPISODE 2:

WHAT IS THE CORONAVIRUS AND COVID-19?

CORE MESSAGE = 'IF WE KNOW IT, WE CAN BEAT IT'

RADIO: *What must we know about COVID-19 disease, and how the Coronavirus spreads?*

Start with playing 'COVID-19 – Together we can beat it' song.

Welcome to the second in our series of 'COVID-19 – Together we can beat it' radio programmes for youth and families. These programmes will give you, our listeners, the information that you need about the Coronavirus and the COVID-19 disease.

Use this information to stay safe and healthy, and to protect yourselves and your families from infection.

Ask questions and share your experience. Phone us on XXX, SMS us on XXX or send a WhatsApp message on XXX to be part of this conversation.

By the end of today's programme, you will understand what the Coronavirus and COVID-19 disease are. We will look at how the disease spreads, who is most at risk, and on how we can stay safe.

I'm joined today by a health specialist, XXXX, as well as by XXX (youth facilitator or other panellist) from XXX. (*Introductions...*)

Let's talk about it!

FIRSTLY, WHAT IS THE CORONAVIRUS AND WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory or breathing disease caused by a new strain of Coronavirus. 'Conona' means 'crown' and the virus gets its name from the 'corona' or crown of spikes around its surface. I'm sure you've seen pictures of the virus?

The SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syncrome) epidemic in 2003 was also caused by a Coronavirus, but its spread across the world was far more restricted. According to the World Health (WHO), about 8 000 people got the SARS disease and fewer than 800 died. In comparison, by the middle of August, the new Coronavirus had caused about 33 million COVID-19 infections and one million deaths.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19?

Symptoms can include fever, cough, tiredness and a loss of taste or smell. These symptoms are similar to symptoms of the flu (influenza) or the common cold, which are a lot more common than COVID-19.

In more severe cases, COVID-19 can cause breathing difficulties or pneumonia. Very rarely, the disease can be fatal.

Children and young people under 20 seldom get sick. If children get sick, then their symptoms are mostly different from those of adults. Common symptoms in children are diarrhoea, vomiting and a loss of taste or smell.

HOW DOES THE CORONAVIRUS SPREAD?

When people who are infected cough, sneeze, talk or sing, they spread the virus in droplets which travel in the air, or land on surfaces around the infected person.

You can be infected if you are close to the infected person and breathe in these droplets. Or if you touch surfaces which have the virus on them, and then touch your face – your eyes, ears or mouth.

HOW CAN YOU KILL THE CORONAVIRUS?

The Coronavirus can survive on surfaces for several hours, but soap and simple disinfectants can kill it. As with other respiratory or breathing infections like the flu or the common cold, simple actions can slow its spread.

OUR FIVE GOLDEN RULES tell you how you can prevent the spread.

Play the chorus of the COVID-19 song.

Being outdoors as much as possible also helps, since fresh air is highly effective at diluting the virus.

POSSIBLE QUESTIONS TO THE PANEL:

To the health specialist:

- 1 What I've just shared is information from the World Health Organisation and other international sources. Is the experience in our country the same? Or is there other information that you would like to share?
- 2 As we've heard, COVID-19 has spread very rapidly across the world since early this year. What is the evidence of the disease in our country?

To the youth facilitator/second panellist:

- 1 How is COVID-19 affecting you and your family?
- 2 What are the biggest challenges that you face because of COVID-19?
- 3 Have you seen signs that it is in your community?