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In light of the recent global events and uncertainties around travel to certain regions, we wish to offer our members the peace of mind that comes with knowing that the Nurses Division of the GMWA is closely monitoring the situations that may impact or disrupt large gatherings.

A new type of coronavirus, abbreviated COVID-19, is causing an outbreak of respiratory (lung) disease. It was first detected in China and has now been detected internationally. While the immediate health risk in the United States is low, it is important to plan for any possible outbreaks if the risk level increases in the future.

The CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

Know the symptoms of COVID-19.

The CDC believes these symptoms appear in a few days after being exposed to someone with the disease or as long as 14 days after exposure:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

For some people the symptoms exhibit that of a cold; for others, they are quite severe or even life-threatening. In either case, it is important to check with your healthcare provider and follow instructions about staying home or away from public spaces to prevent the spread of the virus; model basic hygiene and healthy lifestyle practices for protection.

Practice every day good hygiene—simple steps to prevent the spread of illness:

- Wash hands multiple times a day for at least 20 seconds (singing Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star slowly takes about 20 seconds).
- Cover your mouth with a tissue when you sneeze or cough and throw away the tissue immediately, or sneeze or cough into the bend of their elbow.
- Do not share food or drinks.
- Practice giving fist or elbow bumps instead of handshakes or face kisses. Fewer germs are spread this way.

- Eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly; this will help develop a strong immune system to fight off illness.

Your safety is our number one priority. Below are some of the trusted resources that you can use to stay up-to-date:

- [World Health Organization](#) (WHO)
- [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC)
- [US State Department](#)

We will be putting together more information as the time draws closer to our National convention. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you

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