CANCER and COVID-19

What is COVID-19?
The Basics

What is COVID-19? COVID-19 is a new, life-threatening illness caused by a novel strain of coronavirus first identified in late 2019. COVID-19 causes respiratory tract infections that range from mild cold-like symptoms to serious respiratory illness. The disease is caused by a common family of viruses called coronaviruses. While coronaviruses are common viruses that cause colds or more serious respiratory infections, COVID-19 is a new, life-threatening infection. 

What are coronaviruses?
Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common in many species of animals worldwide. They are named for the spike proteins that extend from the outer surface of the virus, like the crown of a crown.

How does it spread?
Person to person:

- Through the droplets from a cough or sneeze
- By coming into contact with surfaces that are contaminated and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, COVID-19 is spread by close contact. The risk of infection is higher when people are in close contact with each other for prolonged periods, generally defined as within 6 feet for more than 15 minutes. 

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

Sneezing, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, chills, and new onset of confusion or agitation.

What you can do to protect yourself

Preventing illness from the COVID-19 virus is very important. But it is equally important to protect oneself from other illnesses, especially those that can weaken the immune system. 

In general

- Practice proper hand-washing techniques
- Avoid non-essential travel
- Avoid crowded places
- Stay home if you are sick
- Avoid close contact with others
- Wear your face mask, especially in crowded places

When traveling

- Avoid crowds as much as possible
- Maintain at least 6 feet of distance from other people
- Don’t touch food
- Avoid flying, choose a window seat on the plane, and don’t get up during the flight
- Wear an Bandana or cloth mask and stay down during your sitting area

At home

- Avoid close contact with others
- Stay home if you are sick
- Avoid touching your face
- Wash your hands frequently

Sources
- cdc.gov
- asco.org
- cancer.org