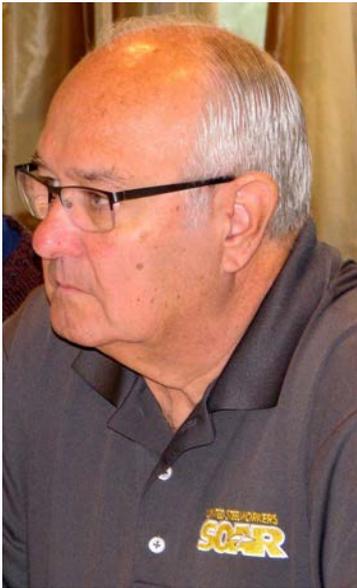




We Will Get Through This



I hope you, your family, and your friends are safe and taking the necessary precautions to avoid getting sick or passing the COVID-19 virus to others, during these difficult times. Most of us have endured catastrophes like hurricanes, floods, snowstorms, and other viruses at some point in our lives. We managed to survive them and I am sure we can defeat our newest opponent.

The coronavirus is changing our lives whether we like it or not, and we must be prepared. It should be very clear, we must maintain multiple ways of communicating with our members. I have asked, without much success, that we develop a system where the Chapters can communicate with their members other than just at meetings. It is now clearer than ever that the SOAR Chapters capture their member's email addresses and phone numbers and share that information with the SOAR office in Pittsburgh.

With the advancements in technology, it is important that SOAR keep up with the newer and faster forms of communication. We should consider appointing a Chairperson of the Communications Committee for every chapter. The task of collecting this information from your members could be delegated to this committee and shared amongst the chapter's leadership and other committees, such as Rapid Response. Many of our members are comfortable communicating by email to inform them about Rapid Response action alerts, meeting notices or other alerts for action, like rallies or assistance on picket lines. This would be a cheaper way to communicate and can be sent on a more timely basis.

The day will come when we will not be asked to stay at home or gather in groups. When those days come, it will be more necessary than ever before that we possess the ability to get the word out to our members quickly, and sending a mailing alone will just not work.

These are difficult times, but knowing what many of our members have gone through in the past, I have no doubt that we will get through this. We hope you, your family and friends stay safe and healthy, so once this is all over we can hit the ground running and continue doing what SOAR does best: mobilizing, demonstrating and being involved in our Union and our communities. Hope to see you out and about real soon.

Bill Pienta, SOAR President

Maintaining Normalcy Amidst the COVID-19 Outbreak



How the COVID-19 health crisis has impacted SOAR members, and retirees in general, is hard to put into words. My thoughts, and those of the SOAR and USW Executive Boards, are with all of you in these trying times.

The Centers for Disease Control (www.cdc.gov/) has information on everything from symptoms, how to protect yourself from possible exposure, and how to prepare yourself for a potential “shelter-in-place” order like we’ve seen implemented in a growing number of states.

Because there is some variation in how states are responding to COVID-19, especially concerning where to go for help or what businesses remain open, the USW created a link where you can find your state’s health department website. Just go to <http://usw.to/StateHealthDepts>

Because Social Security field offices have also been closed, it is important to know that their services continue to be available via the agency’s toll-free line, (800) 772-1213 and its website www.ssa.gov/onlineservices/

If you are just trying to deal with the day-to-day realities of being at home for hours or days on end while keeping yourself healthy, I’d recommend the following:

1. Continue to be active while “social distancing” (the recommendation to keep at least 6 feet between yourself and others to minimize exposure to COVID-19). Unless your state or locale has decided otherwise, we can abide by “social distancing” while going for a walk around the neighborhood or at a local park.
2. Make a schedule! I’ve found that a daily schedule that consists of even basic things like reading, exercise, a hobby, and meal preparation can be helpful in keeping me productive and focused on self-care.
3. Use Facetime, Facebook Live, and other tools to keep connected with family and friends. If you don’t know how to use these services, pick up the phone and call someone close to you who does.

I cannot overstate how important it is for all of us to be taking care of our mental and physical health throughout this national crisis. Our union has put together some resources to help you stay safe, healthy, and well informed. Just go to www.usw.org/covid19

Julie Stein, SOAR Director

SOAR Eyes on Washington – Congress Passes the Most Sweeping Stimulus Bill in U.S. History



As the coronavirus continues to spread across the United States, Congress has been scrambling to find ways to ease its health and economic effects on the country. As of March 30, there have been 155,705 confirmed cases of the COVID-19 virus, with 2,810 deaths and 4,913 recoveries. As a result of governors nationwide issuing stay at home orders, a record number of 3.3 million workers filed for unemployment benefits during the week of March 15. That was the highest single-week number in U.S. history.

To counter the impact of the virus statistics, on March 6, the President signed into law the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Act. The Act provided \$8.3 billion in emergency funds to support the development of a coronavirus vaccine, effective treatment development and public health efforts.

Several days later, the House and Senate passed additional legislation called the Families First Coronavirus Response Act. That bill was seen as a crucial first step to ensure that working-class families facing serious health and financial risks receive the assistance they need to survive the pandemic. It provides for free COVID-19 testing and expanded the Family Medical Leave Act to 12 weeks protected leave for workers who are caring for a loved one or a child, who are at home due to school closures. Also included in the Act, is a provision that requires employers with 500 or fewer workers to provide 80 hours of paid leave time. The time is to be used for caring for a loved one or time spent in quarantine.

As of March 27, the U.S. Senate approved unanimously, and the House passed, by a voice vote, the most substantial economic stimulus package in U.S. history – the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). The bill was signed by the President and has more than ten times the amount spent on the first two coronavirus bills combined. It's more than double the cost of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which was the most significant stimulus bill enacted following the 2008 financial crisis.

The Act will provide urgently needed financial and medical assistance for the COVID-19 pandemic, and will go a long way toward helping America's most vulnerable population – seniors – survive this health crisis. The National Committee to Preserve Social Security & Medicare (NCPSSM) summarized some of the key provisions, in particular, that target older Americans, including:

- Assurances that Social Security beneficiaries can receive cash rebates (\$1,200 for individuals and \$2,400 for couples) like millions of other Americans, even if they have not filed income taxes for 2018 or 2019.
- Enhanced flexibility for Medicare and Medicaid to cover care and support for seniors during the pandemic, including telehealth coverage for patients who can't visit a doctor.
- Extra funding for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to assist nursing homes with infection control and to help states prevent the spread of COVID-19 in nursing homes.
- Enabling of the Medicare Part D prescription drug program to provide Medicare beneficiaries with a three-month supply of medications.
- \$900 million for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), which provides grants to support immediate home energy assistance for low-income households affected by the coronavirus.

While the NCPSSM fully supports these positions, they caution against following measures and any other alterations to the payroll tax that reduces revenue flowing into the Social Security trust fund or undermines the “earned right” nature of the benefit, such as:

- Providing employers with a payroll tax credit for retaining their employees.
- Allowing employers to stop paying into Social Security on behalf of their workers for the rest of the year – with a requirement to repay those funds in 2021 and 2022.

As the Steelworker’s legislative team in Washington continues to push for more relief and economic stimulus, it should be noted that the cost of this package comes in at a whopping \$2 trillion. Couple that with the current national debt and you see that after the coronavirus subsides, the U.S. will be facing massive debt. The Steelworkers and SOAR are going to actively push Congress against using the debt for leveraging future efforts to privatize Social Security and Medicare. We, as SOAR members, must stand ready to act if needed by calling our U.S. Representatives and Senators.

Source: NCPSSM.org National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

Jay McMurrin, SOAR Legislative Director and District 2 SOAR Board Member

Marijuana - What a Beautiful Plant It Is

Believe it or not, graduating from high school in 1961 and serving in the navy during the Vietnam era, and living several years in Starke County, Indiana, where the stuff is (so I’m told) growing all over the place, I just never did know what it looked like.



Then one day, a friend of mine brought the subject up and I mentioned that I’d like to grow a plant to see what it looked like. He brought me five seeds which I planted. The one that germinated first looked the most healthy, so I discarded the others and nurtured the one plant.

Eventually, after repotting it several times until it was finally in a pot about a foot in diameter, it reached the ceiling of my greenhouse. What a gorgeous plant it was with such beautiful leaves. I was going on vacation, so told my friend that he better come and get it. It wasn’t until later that I learned that growing the stuff was against the law.

What a stupid law, and what a dumb thing it is to try to eradicate it. The state police and sheriff’s office will dig and spray and burn, while the kids just follow them down the road and throw seeds out the car window. What a waste of manpower and money. It’s down right stupid to make illegal the growing of a plant that God put on this earth. Most of the stuff that the law “eradicates” (about 98% of it, so I’m told) is just ditch weed and doesn’t contain the chemicals that would make a person “high” anyway. Oh well, what a wonderful world we live in...*Charlie*



A Message From the SOAR Office:

Due to measures taken to prevent further spread of COVID-19, the USW International Headquarters and the SOAR Office are closed. We anticipate a delay in getting out the April SOAR dues refund checks. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience this may cause.

SOAR Chapter Connection

A bi-monthly publication
of SOAR

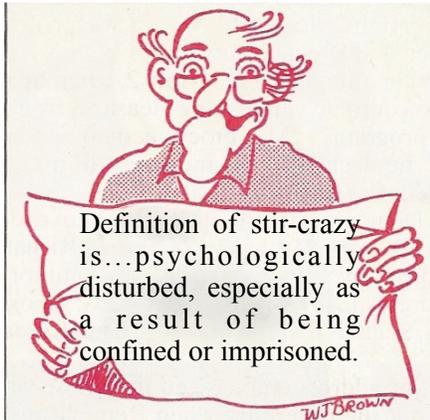
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Old Charlie Sez



Elaine Says...

This saying by John Wesley, founder of the Methodist denomination in the 18th century, seems very appropriate for our present time.

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

More Elaine Says...

As a senior citizen confined to my home, I realize how grateful I am for my mail carrier. She comes every day without fail. Sometimes it is just junk mail but it is so welcome.

I'm thankful for those who are producing our electricity so we can watch television and use our computers. I'm grateful for the internet so I can keep in touch with family and friends. I'm so impressed with the many small businesses and restaurants for their help with goods and services. Thank you all!

The most amazing thing just happened! We are firm believers that something good always comes out of something bad.

In this time of crisis, Charlie and I were recipients of the "something good." This evening, an employee from the Culver, Indiana Library came to our house to tell us she would be happy to deliver material from the library. She even offered to bring food or other needs.

We live at Bass Lake and this special lady was the first person to offer such help. We are overwhelmed and so grateful. And a little choked up. There are very special people in this world and those who are happy to lend a helping hand.

We know other Culver Library employees are going above and beyond the call of duty by being just good human beings.

District Articles and Photos

Please send District and Chapter articles and photos to the SOAR Director, Julie Stein at jstein@usw.org
Photos should have a short caption included.
Thanks so much.

"Brevity is a virtue."

-Larry Spitz

The First Union...
A Poem by Charlie Averill

So often now we hear alot about the Middle East. We wonder why they fight so much, and why it hasn't ceased. Many books and writings, will help us with the quest, but of them all I think I've stumbled on the very best.

Like many other questions, the answers we are liable to find within the holy book, the one we call The Bible. Even our Union's history, goes way far back you see, to when the trodden Israelites were seeking to be free.

Ole Pharaoh thought he'd show em all by pulling dirty tricks, and making them without no straw, just keep producing bricks. But those folks said, "enough's enough, our straw Pharaoh did rob," and Moses told em, everyone, to sit down on the job.

So when the question comes "who was the first labor leader?" You can feel mighty proud and sure to tell the reader; Moses led the first sit down strike, and that ain't no jive, and if you don't believe me look it up in Exodus five.

© Charlie Averill 1993

Keep Out the Scabs...
Another Poem by Charlie Averill

Look around and see the scabs do what you used to do; and then count up the number who've been taken off your crew. Do you see what they've been doin'? Don't think it's just a fluke! They're gettin rid of all of us, it makes me want to puke. You'd think after so many years of loyalty and devotion, they'd try to operate the place without stirring up emotions. Cutting costs can come about, no need to double-cross us. Just start eliminating all those clipboard totin excess bosses.

For every three who labor in the dust and dirt and grime; there's one just doin nothin more than takin care of time. Securing one another's job makes sense to you and me, but keepin all those bosses will result, I guarantee; that down the road our company will all be up for grabs, and all because instead of us they thought they'd have the scabs do all the work we used to do when management was fair, and strove to keep the workers from wanting work elsewhere.

When will they realize that they can't pay us to be loyal, and more than money is required to prompt us all to toil. It don't make sense to think the answers payin half the price, when gettin the job done means that you'll have to do it twice. We don't expect Utopia, but for all that we have given, you'd think that we could count on makin just a decent livin. We don't expect the company to be our benefactor, just reduce the blatant use of those damn outside contractors.

© 1993 Charlie Averill

The McNeil Report---Mouseland as Told by Tommy Douglas in 1944

Mr. Douglas was leader of the New Democratic Party in Canada for 10 years. It's the story of a place called Mouseland... Mouseland was a place where all the little mice lived and played. Were born and died. And they lived much the same as you and I do.

They even had a Parliament. And every four years they had an election. They used to walk to the polls and cast their ballots. Some of them even got a ride to the polls. And got a ride for the next four years afterwards too. Just like you and me. And every time on Election Day all the little mice used to go to the ballot box and they used to elect a government. A government made up of big, fat, black cats.

Now if you think it strange that mice should elect a government made up of cats, you just look at the history of Canada for the last 90 years and maybe you'll see that they weren't any stupider than we are. Now, I'm not saying anything against the cats. They were nice fellows. They conducted their government with dignity. They passed good laws--that is, laws that were good for cats. But the laws that were good for cats weren't very good for mice. One of the laws said that mouseholes had to be big enough so a cat could get his paw in. Another law said that mice could only travel at certain speeds--so that a cat could get his breakfast without too much effort.

All the laws were good laws. For cats. But, oh, they were hard on the mice. And life was getting harder and harder. And when the mice couldn't put up with it anymore, they decided something had to be done about it. So they went en masse to the polls. They voted the black cats out. They put in the white cats. Now the white cats had put up a terrific campaign. They said, "All that Mouseland needs is more vision." They said, "The trouble with Mouseland is those round mouseholes we got. If you put us in we'll establish square mouseholes." And they did. And the square mouseholes were twice as big as the round mouseholes, and now the cat could get both his paws in. And life was tougher than ever.

And when they couldn't take that anymore, they voted the white cats out and put the black ones in again. Then they went back to the white cats. Then to the black cats. They even tried half black cats and half white cats. And they called that coalition. They even got one government made up of cats with spots on them: they were cats that tried to make a noise like a mouse but ate like a cat. You see, my friends, the trouble wasn't with the color of the cat. The trouble was that they were cats. And because they were cats, they naturally looked after cats instead of mice.

Presently there came along one little mouse who had an idea. My friends, watch out for the little fellow with an idea. And he said to the other mice, "Look fellows, why do we keep on electing a government made up of cats? Why don't we elect a government made up of mice?" "Oh," they said, "he's a Bolshevik. Lock him up!" So they put him in jail.

But, I want to remind you:

"That you can lock up a mouse or a man... but you can't lock up an idea!"

Moral of the story: Let's elect representatives that will represent **US for a change!**

Coronavirus Brings Profiteering by Drug Corporations Back to Center Stage

by Robert Roach, Jr.



Defeating the novel coronavirus that causes COVID-19 will require citizens, the government and businesses to work together toward a common purpose. In the long run, we will need a vaccine to protect everyone from this virus. Researchers are working feverishly toward one and Congress needs to demand that any vaccine or drug developed to treat this disease is affordable and available to everyone who needs it.

In the case of vaccines for coronavirus, nearly everyone in development involves public-private partnerships which build on taxpayer-funded research. In many cases, once the research is completed and a drug is approved, the drug corporations receive the profits with no strings attached.

In 2017, the federal government struck a deal with Regeneron Pharmaceuticals and agreed to pay 80 percent of the costs of developing and manufacturing treatments for other viruses and did not require that the final products be affordable. According to The New York Times, Regeneron has the two highest-paid executives in the pharmaceutical industry.

The issue goes beyond the development of new drugs and those developed recently. Rising Pharmaceuticals, a U.S.-based drug corporation, raised the price of a drug that has been on the market for 20 years by 97 percent in January of this year when China began to use it to treat the coronavirus. Only after public pressure did Rising promise to lower the price of the drug back to its pre-outbreak price. Similarly, Gilead Corporation caved to public pressure and withdrew an application to the FDA to grant its experimental coronavirus drug a 7-year monopoly once approved.

We can't rely on public outrage to get corporations to do the right thing. Congress must take meaningful action to stop anti-competitive pharmaceutical corporations from price gouging and profiteering at any time, but especially during a global crisis.

Robert Roach, Jr. is president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He was previously General Secretary-Treasurer of the IAMAW. For more information, visit www.retiredamericans.org.

Take It From Me!

This is pretty old news for some of you, but I just have to warn you fellows who might not be used to washing dishes in a dishwasher, that it's my experience, that if you put into a dishwasher the wrong type of soap, you'll end up with the bubbly soap suds coming out the door, creeping across the kitchen floor and rolling down the basement steps. That will provide you with a clean kitchen floor without a doubt, but you'll have a whole lot of suds to dispose of. Take it from me.....*Charlie*

We're Working Safely, but Diligently



While Americans and the rest of the world population are battling the deadly COVID-19, or Coronavirus, the team at the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM) is working safely, but diligently, to monitor any federal legislation that would have a negative impact on America's manufacturers and workers.

On Wednesday, March 25, AAM President Scott Paul sent a letter to U.S. Customs and Border Protection Acting Commissioner Mark A. Morgan, urging him to resist calls to defer or avoid duty payments on imports from China.

The importers seeking tariff relief are shamefully trying to capitalize on an unprecedented public health crisis to benefit their bottom line. Undercutting domestic manufacturers and American factory workers with a torrent of Chinese imports is hardly a solution.

In the AAM letter, Paul wrote: "This couldn't occur at a worse time for American manufacturing and its workers who are struggling to survive in this sharp economic downturn. Allowing imports to come in without the present payment of duties gives them a price advantage."

"Ninety days may very well signal the demise of a company struggling to compete, even if those tariffs are paid at a later date. It's equivalent to a government-sanctioned fire sale for imports to undermine American producers and their workers."

The U.S. Trade Representative has a process in place to deal with emergency requests that have a direct bearing on a nation's ability to respond to the Coronavirus, added Paul. It would be a mistake to create unwarranted conditions that allow importers to game the system while using the health crisis as a cover for predatory behavior and stockpiling.

Jeff Bonior, Staff Writer at the Alliance for American Manufacturing

This Is What You Call a Filler



Left: Janus motorcycles are made in Goshen, Indiana and made to order.

Right: Recumbent trikes. Catrikes made in Orlando, Florida.

Made in U.S.A.



From Charlie’s Time Capsule



In May 2003, former Education Director from District 31, the late Ray Pasnic, invited SOAR members from our district to participate in a rally/demonstration at the U.S. Supreme Court, for a case dealing with Affirmative Action policies at the University of Michigan.

We boarded the bus at McBride Hall in Gary, Indiana and drove to Washington, D.C. and demonstrated that afternoon at the Supreme Court building, after which, we departed for Linden Hall in Dawson, Pennsylvania, where steaks (they took our orders on the bus) were ready and waiting for us upon our arrival. After a delicious steak dinner, we were given rooms for the night.

After breakfast the next morning, we took a tour of the mansion and then after lunch, boarded the bus and headed back to Indiana. I must say, that was a very memorable experience for me as a relatively new member of SOAR, and I will always be grateful in the way our union treated us retirees. We were made to feel really valuable and special.

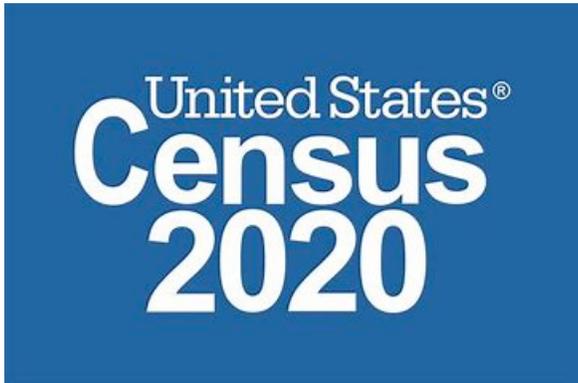


Linden Hall is easily accessible, yet secluded. A 785-acre estate provides escape but is within minutes of excitement. Nestled in the scenic Laurel Highlands, located only 38 miles south of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Linden Hall stands testament to the area’s rich history and pastoral splendor. Linden Hall will be open Monday, April 13, 2020, through October of 2020.

Linden Hall Mansion has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places by the United States Department of the Interior. Linden Hall was purchased and restored to its original grandeur by the United Steel Workers of America in 1976. Today, Linden Hall and Conference Center serves as a training center for Steelworkers from across the United States and Canada.

432 Linden Hall Road, Dawson, PA 15428
Phone: 724-529-7543,

What Is the 2020 Census?



The 2020 Census counts every person living in the United States and five U.S. territories.

The count is mandated by the Constitution and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, a nonpartisan government agency. The 2020 Census counts the population in the United States and five U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). Each home will receive an invitation to respond to a short questionnaire—online, by phone, or by mail—between March 12-20.

Why We Conduct This Count

The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers, and many others use to provide daily services, products, and support for you and your community. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data.

The results of the census also determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives and they are used to draw congressional and state legislative districts.

It's also in the U.S. Constitution: Article 1, Section 2, mandates that the country conduct a count of its population once every 10 years. The 2020 Census will mark the 24th time that the country has counted its population since 1790. Census results help determine how billions of dollars in federal funding flow into states and communities each year.

When you respond to the census, your answers are kept anonymous. They are used only to produce statistics. The U.S. Census Bureau is bound by law to protect your answers and keep them strictly confidential. The law ensures that your private information is never published and that your answers cannot be used against you by any government agency or court.



How to Respond

The 2020 Census is happening now. You can respond online at [2020census.gov](https://2020census.gov/en.html), by phone or by mail. Source: <https://2020census.gov/en.html>

What you need to know about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

What is coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

Can people in the U.S. get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the United States. Risk of infection with COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19. Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

Have there been cases of COVID-19 in the U.S.?

Yes. The first case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on January 21, 2020. The current count of cases of COVID-19 in the United States is available on CDC's webpage at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-in-us.html>.

How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath



CS 314937-A 03/20/2020

What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

How can I help protect myself?

People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- 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.

What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

Is there a vaccine?

There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.

cdc.gov/COVID19