

**General Awareness and Precautions on Food Safety/Hygiene and
General Awareness on Nutrition
April 2020**

Key Messages to Communities

Who: All individuals impacted by novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), with a particular focus on vulnerable populations (i.e. IDPs, refugees, returnees and host communities)

Why: The Ministry of Health has reported cases of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), and the Iraqi Government has taken decisions to limit gatherings. Coronavirus is serious and that can make you very ill, but there are some simple measures you can take which will help protect you and your family.

What: To help avoid the virus, practice **food safety and good hygiene**, particularly when preparing food:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, especially between handling raw and cooked food.
- Avoid touching your face, particularly if you have not washed your hands.
- Keep surfaces and kitchen tools clean.
- Use safe water when preparing food.
- Wash fruit and vegetables.
- Use different chopping boards and knives for raw meat and cooked foods.
- Handle raw meat with care and cook thoroughly – make sure it is steaming hot!
- Avoid eating sick animals or animals that have died of diseases.
- Separate raw and cooked food.
- Keep your children away from raw meat and other kitchen tools.
- Don't leave food at room temperature for more than two hours as bacteria can grow on it. Put it in the fridge and reheat your leftovers thoroughly before eating.
- Keep your grocery shopping bags clean. After shopping, sanitise bags, wash your hands and the food thoroughly.

Pregnant and lactating women should take the usual precautions to avoid infection. This includes regular handwashing and avoiding close contact with anyone showing symptoms such as coughing and sneezing; stay more than three steps away.

Lactating women:

- Mothers who do not have indications of COVID-19 can continue breastfeeding, while applying all the necessary actions to protect against the infection.
- Mothers who have symptoms of fever, cough or difficulty breathing, should seek medical advice immediately.
- Breastfeeding mothers should take all possible precautions to avoid spreading the virus to children, including washing hands before and after touching the infant, wearing a protective face mask if possible while breastfeeding, and regularly cleaning/disinfecting surfaces in the home.

One of the best ways to stay healthy is by eating a **healthy and nutritious diet** to boost your immune system. It will help you ward off infection and illness. For example:

- **Eat fruits and vegetables** are an important part of eating healthy when possible.
- **Limit your salt intake.** Use iodized salt if possible.
- **Limit your sugar intake.** Drinking safe water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages is a simple way to limit your intake of sugar and excess calories.
- **Limit your fat intake.** Opt for cooking methods that require less or no fat, such as steaming, grilling or lightly sautéing, instead of frying. If needed, use small amounts of unsaturated oils such as olive or sunflower oil to cook foods. Choose foods that contain healthy sources of unsaturated fats, such as fish and nuts.
- **Consume enough fiber.** Aim to include vegetables, fruit, pulses and wholegrain foods in your meals. Wholegrain foods include oats, brown pasta and brown rice, and whole-wheat breads, rather than refined grain foods such as white pasta and white rice, and white bread. Lentils and beans are good sources of protein, and rich in vitamins and minerals.
- **Stay hydrated.** Good hydration is crucial for optimal health. Drink safe water, and avoid drinking large amounts of coffee, tea, soft drinks and energy drinks.
- **Eat healthy, stay healthy!** Good nutrition and self-care will help strengthen your immune system.
- **Stay active**— and remember to stay three steps away from people outside of your household.

Your family's health and safety are of the utmost importance to us, so please closely follow the advice provided by the government and World Health Organization. If you are not sure of the most recent health guidance, please contact your Camp Management, or your nearest health unit inside or near the camp.

Thank you for helping keep your family and local community safe!

Questions, feedback and further information

- **IDPs:** For more information, or to provide feedback, please call the Iraq Information Centre toll-free at **80069999**.
- **Refugees:** For more information, or to provide feedback, please call the Iraq Information Centre **80010999** (free only for Korek mobile subscribers), or **07510200149 / 07517407005** (these numbers will incur a charge to call).
- **For all people:** All calls are confidential. You can also approach the Help Desks in camps (during the first days of distributions (“cash-out.”))
- **For more health information:** In the Kurdistan Region, please call **122**. In the rest of Iraq, please call **123**.

General Awareness and Precautions on Food Safety and Hygiene – April 2020

Key Messages to Food Producers, Transporters, Retailers

Who: All Food Producers, Transporters, Retailers, especially those serving vulnerable populations (i.e. IDPs, refugees, returnees and host communities).

Why: The Ministry of Health has reported cases of the novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), and the Iraqi Government has taken decisions to limit gatherings. Coronavirus is a serious illness that can make you very ill, but there are some simple measures you can take which will help protect you, your family, your customers and the local community

What: To help avoid the virus:

- Wash your hands with soap and water before and after handling produce, animal products and other food items.
- Sanitize your equipment, vehicles and storage containers before harvesting, storing and transporting food.
- Handle raw meat with care. Sick animals and animals that have died of diseases should not be eaten.
- Wear a mask if you feel ill, or caring for someone who is ill.
- Keep produce, animal products and other food items at the right temperature.
- For **farmers**: Work in your fields, but keep two meters between you and fellow farmers.
- For **food transporters and retailers**: Think about your customers and their families – wash your hands, sanitize surfaces and the instruments, keep shopping bags in a clean place, avoid having many people touching the products, especially fruits and vegetables, and maintain general hygiene.
- For **retailers**: Encourage customers to maintain distance between themselves as they shop and checkout, either by limiting the number of people in the store or placing lines on the ground to maintain distance between customers.
Here is an example of how this can be done:



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Questions, feedback and further information

- **For more health information:** In the Kurdistan Region, please call **122**. In the rest of Iraq, please call **123**.