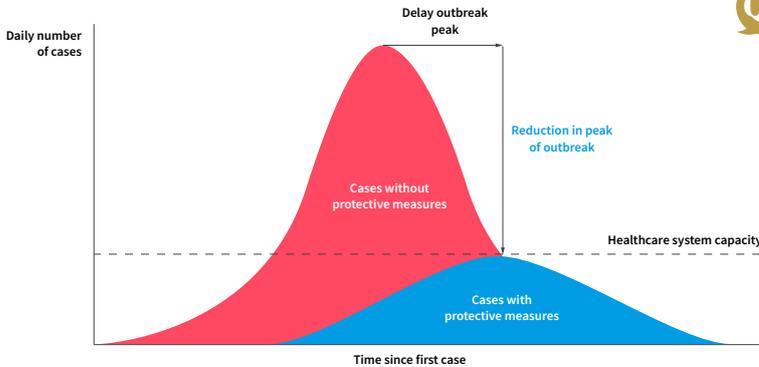


SECTION FIVE

Frequently Asked Questions



Q1 Have we flattened the curve yet?

Scientists and health professionals are still talking a lot about ‘flattening the curve’. What does that mean and how can you help?

The idea is to slow the spread of a virus so fewer people need to seek treatment at the same time; if you are looking at a graph, the peak is smaller. Many communities implemented social distancing or complete lockdowns during the outbreak to keep the number of people affected at any one time as low as

possible. A slower infection rate flattened the curve and reduced stress on healthcare systems, with fewer hospital visits on any given day, and no fever-sick people being turned away.

As there is currently no vaccine or specific treatment for COVID-19, the only way to flatten the curve is through collective action. If we continue to consciously reduce physical interaction with each other now, a during the early days, we can continue to limit the spread of the virus.

Being back in the workspace does not mean we can relax. But we hope you will recognise it as a sign of hope for the present and the future.

Q2 How do I look after my mask?

Your HR department will be able to tell you if you still need or are recommended to wear a face mask. They can be effective in preventing the spread of disease when used in combination with frequent hand-cleaning with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.

If you wear a mask:

- Before putting on your mask, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water.
- Cover your mouth and nose with mask and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- Avoid touching the mask while using it; if you do, clean your hands.
- Replace the mask with a new one as soon as it is damp and do not re-use single-use masks.
- To remove the mask: take it off from behind (do not touch the front); discard it immediately in a closed bin; clean your hands.



CDC recommends wearing cloth face coverings to save surgical masks for health workers. You can use coverings fashioned from household items such as cotton fabric and t-shirts, or wear a bandana. They should be routinely washed after use.

Q3 What if I'm supposed to be back in the workplace, but my kids (and parents) are still at home?

It's never been easy juggling work with personal commitments, and this will not go away. COVID-19 has been indiscriminate. Do tell your boss or HR manager about your personal situation if you are in difficulty. In these times more than ever, we hope they will understand your concerns and do their best to help you manage the situation.

You may find your employer can offer you flexibility, such as coming into your workplace only in the morning or afternoon. Even varying the time of arrival or departure can be of huge benefit in avoiding rush hour.



Q4 What is the role of telehealth in returning to the workplace?

Over the past few months, companies have been discovering the very best of technology and online resources. The same can be said for health technology, particularly telehealth, which became more important during difficult times, as part of the battle to support people as they dealt with social distancing, lock-downs and isolation.

If you are back in the workplace, you can still use telehealth. If you are worried about your physical or mental health, your employer may be able to give you access to this important service.

Q5 Why is a smile better rather than a hug?

We learnt new ways of expressing ourselves during the spread of COVID-19. With governments still encouraging citizens to avoid non-essential, close personal contact, hugs and kisses are still not the right thing to do in public.

So, how do you greet someone at work, without shaking their hand, or offering them a hug?

- You can join your own hands together and shake them.
- You can wave one of your hands in a gesture of good will.
- In some cultures, it's long been a custom to put your own palms together and bow slightly.
- A smile never fails – if wearing a mask, you can always tell the other person you are smiling.

