



MARITZBURG COLLEGE

Dear Parent Community

COVID-19 Coronavirus

We have been in communication with the National Institute of Communicable Disease [NICD] following the confirmation of South Africa's first COVID-19 virus case in Hilton yesterday. They are still in discussion about what they will do with schools in the event of an outbreak in South Africa. They confirmed that the patients at high risk are the elderly, the sickly i.e. diabetics, HIV patients and those who are immune compromised.

What are we as a school doing?

1. We are taking all necessary precautions and the staff and boys have been briefed about the protocols
2. Our Sanatorium have been extremely proactive and are fully aware of all signs and symptoms of the virus and will respond appropriately
3. We strongly advise that all boys and staff look at having the flu jab and will arrange for our boarders as we have done in the past
4. Handwashing with soap and water for 20 seconds is our first line of defence
5. Hand sanitizer, which has a 60% alcohol base should be used as a second line of defence
6. If a boy becomes ill, he will be isolated immediately and sent home as soon as possible

What precautions can you do to assist?

1. NO HANDSHAKING! Use a fist bump, slight bow, elbow bump, etc.
2. Use ONLY your knuckle to touch light switches, elevator buttons, etc.
3. Open doors with your closed fist or hip - do not grasp the handle with your hand, unless there is no other way to open the door.
4. Use disinfectant wipes at the shops/malls when they are available, including wiping the handle and child seat in grocery carts.
5. Wash your hands with soap for 20 seconds and use a greater than 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer whenever you return home from ANY activity that involves locations where other people have been.
6. Keep a bottle of sanitizer available at each of your home's entrances AND in your car for use after getting petrol or touching other contaminated objects when you can't immediately wash your hands.
7. If possible, cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue and discard. Use your elbow only if you have to. The clothing on your elbow will contain infectious virus that can be passed on for up to a week or more!
8. If your son becomes ill, you must keep him at home and he must not come to school at all.

In the event of the situation deteriorating we recommend you:

1. Stock up now with **disposable surgical masks** and use them to prevent you from touching your nose and/or mouth (We touch our nose/mouth 90X/day without knowing it!). This is the only way this virus can infect you - it is lung-specific. The mask will not prevent the virus in a direct sneeze from getting into your nose or mouth - it is only to keep you from touching your nose or mouth.
2. Stock up now with **hand sanitizers** and latex/nitrile gloves (get the appropriate sizes for your family). The hand sanitizers must be alcohol-based and greater than 60% alcohol to be effective.
3. Stock up now with zinc lozenges. Lozenges have been proven to be effective in blocking coronavirus (and most other viruses) from multiplying in your throat and nasopharynx. Use as directed several times each day when you begin to feel ANY "cold-like" symptoms beginning.

I assure all parents that you will be notified immediately if the situation changes.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our staff in the SAN on 033 342 1158 or 066 254 3128

A coronavirus hotline has been created, to field any questions or concerns, they are being inundated at present, please be patient with them. Their contact number is: 0800 029 999.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Luman', with a horizontal line underneath.

Chris Luman
Headmaster

6 March 2020