

Soldiers have reported concerns about COVID-19 and its impact on the health of their family and friends, their finances, and on unit and mission readiness. Confronted with this historic challenge, leaders have an opportunity to make a difference in the quality of life and readiness of their Soldiers.

Below are a number of leadership steps that can help strengthen and protect the physical and behavioral health of their Soldiers and units.

LEADER ACTIONS TO PROMOTE UNIT READINESS DURING COVID-19

Lead by Example	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Lead by example by following health guidelines to reduce the spread of COVID-19 (such as social distancing, handwashing, using mask/face covering). <input type="checkbox"/> Share with your Soldiers how the COVID-19 pandemic has personally impacted you.
Educate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Share up-to-date, consistent, and accurate information about the COVID-19 pandemic. <input type="checkbox"/> Provide updates about recent COVID-19 pandemic related developments. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage Soldiers to report any symptoms of COVID-19 they might have.
Acknowledge the Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge the stress of uncertainty related to the COVID-19 pandemic. <input type="checkbox"/> Emphasize taking care of each other during the COVID-19 pandemic. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage Soldiers to identify what can and cannot be controlled about the COVID-19 pandemic. <input type="checkbox"/> Discuss plans to maintain unit readiness during the pandemic.
Deal in Optimism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage Soldiers to think positively during this COVID-19 pandemic. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on what to be grateful for during the COVID-19 pandemic. <input type="checkbox"/> Remind Soldiers during the COVID-19 pandemic that we are here to serve with honor, serve a mission, and serve a greater purpose.
Set the Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Modify unit tasks to prevent Soldiers from working in close proximity to one another. <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure Soldiers have basic supplies for daily living (like food, soap, and toilet paper) during the COVID-19 pandemic. <input type="checkbox"/> Take steps to keep Soldiers socially connected as a unit during the COVID-19 pandemic.

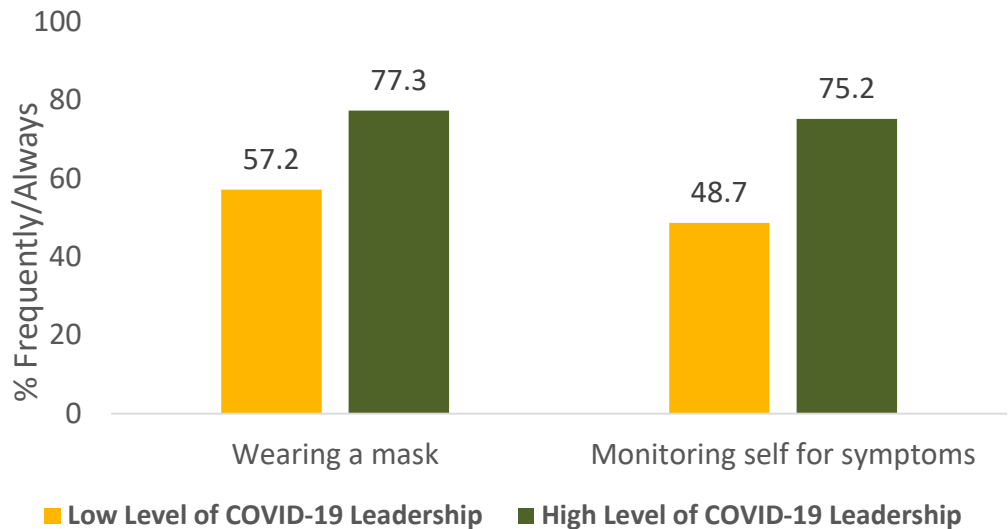
SOLDIERS SURVEYED ABOUT COVID-19

20,000+

More than 20,000 Soldiers completed the anonymous Behavioral Health Advisory Team (BHAT) COVID-19 survey in 2020, a collaboration between the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and the Army Public Health Center.

RESULTS: PREVENTIVE HEALTH PRACTICES

Soldiers who said that their leaders engaged in COVID-19 leadership behaviors were more likely to engage in preventive medicine practices than those who said their leaders did not engage in COVID-19 leadership behaviors. This relationship held even after accounting for general leadership ratings, COVID-19 concerns, and Soldier rank.



RESULTS: BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Less Loneliness

Less Depression

Less Anxiety

Fewer Alcohol Problems

Fewer Sleep Problems

Soldiers who said that their leaders engaged in COVID-19 leadership were less likely to report behavioral health problems than those who said their leaders did not engage in COVID-19 leadership, even after accounting for general leadership ratings, COVID-19 concerns, and Soldier rank.

MAKING THE LINK

These results suggest that it takes more than simply being a good leader—it means you need to be a good leader in managing your unit's stress related to COVID-19. These results also mean that Soldiers of all ranks stand to benefit from leaders who take action to maximize unit readiness during the COVID-19 pandemic.



For current COVID-19 information:

<https://phc.amedd.army.mil/covid19>
<https://www.coronavirus.gov/>

The Military Health System Nurse Advice Line is available 24/7:

Call 1-800-874-2273 option #1

or visit <https://www.health.mil/I-Am-A/Media/Media-Center/NAL-Day-at-a-glance>

For more information, contact your installation's Department of Public Health



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Army Public Health

The Army COVID-19 Information Hotline:

1-800-984-8523

Overseas DSN 312-421-370

Stateside DSN 421-3700