

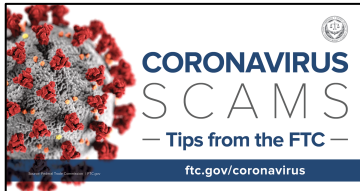


# FRAUD SQUAD ALERT

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## CORONAVIRUS SCAMS

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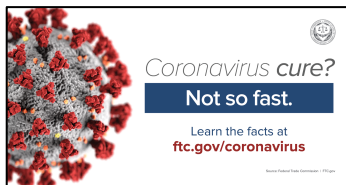
Scammers are taking advantage of fears surrounding the Coronavirus.

### Avoid Coronavirus Scams

Here are some tips to help you keep the scammers at bay:

- Don't click on links from sources you don't know. They could download viruses onto your computer or device.
- Watch for emails claiming to be from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) or experts saying they have information about the virus. **For the most up-to-date information about the Coronavirus, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO).**
- Ignore online offers for vaccinations. There currently are no vaccines, pills, potions, lotions, lozenges or other prescription or over-the-counter products available to treat or cure Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) — online or in stores.
- Do your homework when it comes to donations, whether through charities or crowdfunding sites. Don't let anyone rush you into making a donation. If someone wants donations in cash, by gift card, or by wiring money, don't do it.

### What the FTC is Doing



The FTC and FDA have jointly issued warning letters to seven sellers of unapproved and misbranded products, claiming they can treat or prevent the Coronavirus. The companies' products include teas, essential oils, and colloidal silver.

The FTC says the companies have no evidence to back up their claims — as required by law.

The FDA says there are no approved vaccines, drugs or investigational products currently available to treat or prevent the virus.

# Checks from the Government

March 18, 2020

by Jennifer Leach Associate Director, Division of Consumer and Business Education, FTC



\*\*\* As the Coronavirus takes a growing toll on people's pocketbooks, there are reports that the government will soon be sending money by check or direct deposit to each of us. The details are still being worked out, but there are a few really important things to know, no matter what this looks like.

1. The government will not ask you to pay anything up front to get this money. No fees. No charges. No nothing.
2. The government will not call to ask for your Social Security number, bank account, or credit card number. Anyone who does is a scammer.
3. These reports of checks aren't yet a reality. Anyone who tells you they can get you the money now is a scammer.

\*\*\* Look, normally we'd wait to know what the payment plan looks like before we put out a message like this. But these aren't normal times. **And we predict that the scammers are gearing up to take advantage of this.**

So, remember: no matter what this payment winds up being, only scammers will ask you to pay to get it.

If you spot one of these scams, please tell the Federal Trade Commission at: [www.ftc.gov/complaint](http://www.ftc.gov/complaint). We're doing our best to stop these scammers in their tracks, and your report will help.

[ftc.gov/coronavirus](http://ftc.gov/coronavirus)

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The Medicare.gov logo, featuring the word "Medicare" in a green serif font and ".gov" in a smaller, blue sans-serif font, all within a light blue rectangular background.

## Protect yourself from fraud

[medicare.gov/fraud](http://medicare.gov/fraud)

Scammers may use COVID-19 as an opportunity to steal your identity and commit Medicare fraud. In some cases, they might tell you they'll send you a Coronavirus test, masks, or other items in exchange for your Medicare number or personal information. Be wary of unsolicited requests for your Medicare number or other personal information.

It's important to always guard your Medicare card like a credit card and check your Medicare claims summary forms for errors. Only give your Medicare number to participating Medicare pharmacists, primary and specialty care doctors or people you trust to work with Medicare on your behalf. Remember, Medicare will never call you to ask for or check your Medicare number.