What to do if you have coronavirus disease (COVID-19)

If have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are suspected to have COVID-19 and are sick, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.

Symptoms of COVID-19

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough and shortness of breath. If you have been exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19 and are experiencing fever with either cough or shortness of breath, you might have COVID-19. Contact your medical provider to see if you need to be tested. If you have tested positive for COVID-19 or are suspected to have COVID-19 without having been tested, you should follow the below instructions.

Stay home except to get medical care

You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home

Stay away from people as much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while sick. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick; if you must care for your pet, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a facemask.

Call ahead before visiting your medical provider

If you have a medical appointment, call the medical provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider’s office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

Wear a facemask

You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a medical provider’s office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not be in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately clean your hands as described below.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water is preferred. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
Avoid sharing personal household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

Clean all “high-touch” surfaces often

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Monitor your symptoms

Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). Before seeking care, call your medical provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the medical provider’s office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

Ask your healthcare provider to call the local or state health department to discuss your situation.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or may have COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

Discontinuing home isolation

For individuals with symptoms who have tested positive for COVID-19 or are believed to have COVID-19 and are directed to care for themselves at home, you may stop home isolation under the following conditions:

- 3 days with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications;
- Symptoms have improved (e.g. cough and shortness of breath have improved);
- At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

Additional information for your household members, intimate partners, and caregivers is available at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html