What to do if you have symptoms of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and have not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19

If you have a fever, cough, or shortness of breath but have not been around anyone that you know has COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent your infection from spreading to people in your home and community.

Could I have COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, shortness of breath, new confusion or inability to arouse, and bluish lips or face. If you have these symptoms but have not been around anyone who you know has COVID-19, the likelihood that you have COVID-19 is fairly low. COVID-19 is in some communities in Stanislaus County but several other respiratory viruses are also in Stanislaus County as well.

Should I go to my medical provider and get tested for COVID-19?

If you have any of the high-risk conditions that may increase your risk for a serious viral infection—age 65 years or over, are pregnant, or have medical conditions (immune compromised, heart disease, lung disease, diabetes and pregnant)—call your medical provider’s office for advice and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients. They may want to monitor your health more closely or test you for COVID-19 or influenza.

If you do not have a high-risk condition and your symptoms are mild, you do not need to be evaluated in person and do not need to be tested for COVID-19. There are currently no medications to treat COVID-19.

What should I do to keep my infection from spreading to my family and other people in the community?

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.

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.

Animals: 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. See COVID-19 and Animals for more information.

Call ahead before visiting your medical provider

If you have a medical appointment, call your medical provider and tell them that you have symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19. This will help the 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 your healthcare 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 wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water is preferred if hands are visibly dirty.

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 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 if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Clean all “high-touch” surfaces every day

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

Get medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). Call your healthcare provider and tell them that your symptoms are consistent with COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility, if possible. These steps will help the healthcare provider’s office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting your infection.

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

Home isolation

If you have fever, cough or shortness of breath and have not been around anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19, you should stay home away from others for 7 days or until 72 hours after the fever is gone without use of fever-reducing medications and symptoms get better.

Stanislaus County Public Health