

Home Care and Self-Isolation Guidance for People with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Your healthcare provider and local health department (LHD) will evaluate whether you can be cared for at home. If it is determined that you do not need to be hospitalized and can be isolated at home, you will be monitored by staff from your LHD. You should follow the prevention steps below until a healthcare provider or LHD says you can return to your normal activities.

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.

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. It is especially important to stay away from persons who are elderly or have underlying chronic diseases, as they are at higher risk of severe disease.

Animals: You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while you are sick with COVID-19, just like you would around other people. Avoid contact including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a face mask. See [COVID-19 and Animals](#) for more information.

Call ahead before visiting your doctor

If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare 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 face mask

You should wear a face mask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a face mask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a face mask 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 60% to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60% to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty. 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 every day

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables should be cleaned every day. 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) and notify your LHD. Before seeking care, call your healthcare provider and tell them you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a face mask before you enter the facility. This will help the healthcare provider’s office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or are being evaluated for COVID-19. If possible, put on a face mask before emergency medical services arrive.

Discontinuing home isolation

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.

Recommended precautions for household members, intimate partners, and caregivers

Household members, intimate partners, and caregivers in a non-healthcare setting may have close contact with a person with symptomatic, laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 or a person under investigation. They should follow these precautions:

- Make sure that you understand and can help the patient follow their healthcare provider’s instructions for medication(s) and care. You should help the patient with basic needs in the home and provide support for getting groceries, prescriptions, and other personal needs.
- Monitor the patient’s symptoms. If the patient is getting sicker, call his or her healthcare provider and let them know the patient has or is being evaluated for COVID-19. If the patient has a medical emergency and you need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that the patient has, or is being evaluated for COVID-19.
- Household members should stay in another room or be separated from the patient as much as possible. Household members should use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if available.
- Prohibit visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home.
- Household members should care for any pets in the home. Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. For more information, see [COVID-19 and Animals](#).
- Perform hand hygiene frequently. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60% to 95% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- You and the patient should wear a face mask if you are in the same room.
- Avoid sharing household items with the patient. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After the patient uses these items, you should wash them thoroughly.
- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
- Discuss any additional questions with your state or local health department or healthcare provider.
- Close contacts should monitor their health; they should call their healthcare provider right away if they develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath) and share that they have been in contact with an individual known or suspect of having COVID19.