

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS ABOUT SELF-ISOLATION (and quarantine) FOR PEOPLE WITH VIRUS SYMPTOMS

This information is for patients with suspected COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Infection when no test was performed. It is extremely important that you follow these instructions.

General Information

You came to the Emergency Department with symptoms of a viral illness, including muscle aches, fevers, chills, runny nose, cough, sneezing, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea. It is possible that you have COVID-19, also known as the coronavirus. Because we do not know for sure, you should assume that **YOU DO HAVE THIS VIRUS**.

At this time, there are not enough tests to test everyone for coronavirus. Only patients who are very sick are getting tests.

What Should You Do Next

Even if you have COVID-19, most people have mild symptoms and recover on their own. Resting, staying hydrated, and sleeping are typically helpful. As of today's visit, you are well enough to go home and treat your symptoms with oral fluids, medicines for fevers, cough, pain, etc. You can use medication such as Acetaminophen (Tylenol) or Ibuprofen (Motrin) for fevers, cough and pain. There is no special medicine or vaccine for COVID-19.

However, it is very important for you to do certain things to prevent the spread of the virus.

We want to help you keep other people from getting this virus. Older people and people with illnesses are at high risk of severe illness. Please follow the steps below and contact your primary care physician for further help.

1. Stay home except to get medical care. People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 should stay at home during their illness. In order to not infect other people, avoid contact with others both inside and outside your home.
 - a. Do not go to work, school, or to any public areas.
 - b. Avoid grocery shopping if possible - have a friend or family member pick up food and drop it off.
 - c. Avoid large crowds, public transportation, ride sharing or taxis.
2. Wash 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. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
3. 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. If you have to leave your house to go to a public place or see a doctor, wear a surgical mask (or bandanna, or scarf) to catch your cough.

4. Separate yourself from other people and animals in your house for at least 7 days. If possible, stay in a specific room away from other people. If you have a separate bathroom, have one bathroom be for the sick person only. Do not handle pets or other animals. 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. The elderly and people who have chronic illness have a higher risk of becoming very sick if they get COVID-19. Please try to avoid contact with people over 60 years old or anyone with chronic heart or lung disease, diabetes, or any condition that weakens their immune system (cancer, transplant patients).

5. 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.

6. Wear a face-mask. You should wear a face-mask when you are around other people 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.

7. Call ahead before visiting your doctor. If you need to see your doctor, it is essential that you call first 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.

When to Return to the Emergency Department

Please return to the emergency department if you feel you are getting sicker, for example: worsening difficulty breathing or chest pain, if you are unable to eat or drink, if you have severe vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, fainting or near fainting. If possible, put on a face-mask before you enter the hospital to protect other patients. If you feel you are sick enough to call 911, please tell them you may have COVID.

Medications you can take

If able, you can take Acetaminophen (Tylenol) 500mg every 4-6 hours for pain or fever. You can also take Ibuprofen 400mg every 6 hours for pain or fever. Tylenol and Ibuprofen can be taken together or separately.

Please continue your regular medications. It is very important to stay as healthy as possible.

When can I go back to my regular life?

Once you have NO SYMPTOMS (no fever, no cough, no runny nose) for 7 days, you can go back to work. If testing becomes available before then, you could get tested. However, you should call and confirm that you can get a test before leaving your house.

Taking care of your mental health

You might be feeling anxious, afraid, lonely or uncertain. Below is a link for a list of helpful behavioral health resources, and a few tips for taking care of your emotional health while you're quarantined.

<https://store.samhsa.gov/system/files/sma14-4894.pdf>

Additional information can be found on the following websites:

CDC Corona Website General Information: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

Important Instructions for family members and household contacts

How do I take care of someone who's quarantined in my home?

If you are providing care for a person infected or suspected to be infected with COVID-19, please note the following. These instructions are also at this link: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html>

Household members, intimate partners, and caregivers in a non-health care setting may have close contact (within 6 feet) with a person with symptomatic, laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 or a person under investigation. Those in close contact should monitor their health and should call their health care provider right away if they develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath).

Those in close contacts should also follow these recommendations:

Make sure that you understand and can help the patient follow their health care 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

1. Monitor the patient's symptoms. If the patient is getting sicker, call his or her health care provider and tell them that the patient has laboratory-confirmed or is under investigation for COVID-19. This will help the health care provider's office take steps to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected. Ask the health care provider to call the local or state health department for additional guidance. 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.
2. 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.
3. Prohibit visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home.
4. Household members should care for any pets in the home. Do not handle pets or other animals while sick.
5. Make sure that shared spaces in the home have good airflow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window, weather permitting.
6. 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, 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.
7. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
8. You and the patient should wear a face-mask if you are in the same room.
 - a. Wear a disposable face-mask and gloves when you touch or have contact with the patient's blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit or urine.
 - b. Throw out disposable face-masks and gloves after using them. Do not reuse.

9. When removing personal protective equipment, first remove and dispose of gloves. Then, immediately clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Next, remove and dispose of face-masks, and immediately clean your hands again with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
10. 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 (see below “Wash laundry thoroughly”)
11. 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
 - a. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions.
 - b. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning products including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during the use of the product.
12. Wash laundry thoroughly.
 - a. Immediately remove and wash clothes or bedding that have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
 - b. Wear disposable gloves while handling soiled items and keep soiled items away from your body.
 - c. Clean your hands (with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) immediately after removing your gloves.
 - d. Read and follow directions on labels of laundry or clothing items and detergent.
 - e. In general, using a normal laundry detergent according to washing machine instructions and dry thoroughly using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.
13. Place all used disposable gloves, face-masks, and other contaminated items in a lined container before disposing of them with other household waste. Clean your hands (with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) immediately after handling these items. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty

Discuss any additional questions with your state or local health department or health care provider

What do I do if I develop symptoms?

If you develop symptoms, and your household member has confirmed COVID, you likely have COVID. You should follow self-isolation instructions above. If your household member has suspected COVID, and tests are available, you can call your doctor about getting a test. You should stay home, as above, and seek medical care only if you are having difficulty breathing or other severe symptoms.