

Home Care Instructions for COVID-19 Coronavirus

People who may have been exposed to COVID-19 coronavirus but are not sick or experiencing symptoms may be asked to stay in their homes until they are no longer able to spread disease as advised by the Health Department. This is called **quarantine**, which is an effective method to control the spread of infectious diseases.

People who are sick with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 coronavirus will be asked to stay home in **isolation** until they are advised by the Health Department that isolation can be discontinued.

General Precautions

- ◆ Anyone who is in isolation or quarantine should try to stay away from other people in the home.
- ◆ People who are sick should stay home for the entire isolation period, except to go to the doctor. If they do have to go outside, the patient should wear a surgical mask.
- ◆ Only one person should take care of the person in isolation or quarantine. This person should be the only person to have direct contact with the patient or their room. For example, this person should bring them meals, help get them clean, and help change sheets.
- ◆ Try to limit the number of people in the home. If people who aren't caring for the patient can temporarily live somewhere else, they should. If they cannot, they should limit contact with the patient as much as possible.
- ◆ Visitors and people who do not need to be in the home should not visit. If someone else must come into the home, they should avoid close contact with the patient and should wear a surgical mask.

Preventive Measures That Patients Should Follow

- ◆ The patient should cover their nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing, sneezing, or blowing their nose. Used tissues should be disposed of in a trash can with a bag in it. The patient should wash their hands after throwing the used tissue in the trash.
- ◆ The patient should have their own separate bedroom and bathroom if that's an option. If they don't have their own space, try to make certain parts of the home just for them. If other people in the home are sick, they can share sleeping and living space. People who don't have symptoms should not share space with people who are sick.
- ◆ The patient should wash their hands often, using plenty of warm water and either bar or liquid soap.

- ◆ The patient should wear a surgical mask when they are around other people. If the patient cannot wear a mask, the person who is taking care of them should wear a mask. Masks should fit snugly around the face. Do not touch the mask and change it at least once a day.

Preventive Measures That Other People in the Home Should Follow

- ◆ People who aren't sick should sleep in a different room away from the patient and should avoid close contact, like kissing. Don't share personal items like toothbrushes, utensils, or drinks with the patient.
- ◆ Everyone in the home should wash their hands often, using plenty of warm water and either bar or liquid soap. Alcohol-based hand sanitizer can be used in addition to handwashing or if the person taking care of the patient can't wash them with soap and water right away.
- ◆ Whoever is taking care of the patient should wear a surgical mask. Masks should fit snugly around the face and should not be touched or handled during use. The mask should be changed at least daily, or sooner if it gets wet or dirty.
- ◆ If gloves are worn by the person taking care of the patient, they should still wash their hands often. Immediately after the gloves are removed, they should be thrown away and the person should wash their hands. Gloves must never be washed or reused.

How to Keep the Home Clean

- ◆ Surfaces that are frequently touched by the patient should be cleaned with a household disinfectant at least daily. The person who performs the cleaning should wear rubber gloves.
- ◆ The bathroom used by the patient should be cleaned daily, if possible. Rubber gloves should be worn during the cleaning process.

Handling of Laundry, Trash, and Household Waste

- ◆ Wash laundry thoroughly.
 - Wear throwaway gloves when handling dirty laundry from a sick person. After you remove the gloves, throw them away and wash your hands with soap and water.
 - Follow directions on laundry and detergent labels. If possible, launder items using the warmest recommended water setting and dry items completely.
- ◆ Dirty dishes and utensils can be washed either in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap. There is no need to separate the patient's dishes from everyone else's.
- ◆ Trash from the patient and the person who is taking care of them should be put in a trash bag. This trash can go out with the rest of the home's trash.

Medical Care and Doctor's Visits

- ◆ If the patient needs to go to the doctor's office or to the hospital, call ahead to the provider's office before you go.
- ◆ Call 911 for any medical emergency.
- ◆ Persons who are in quarantine should check and record their temperature every day. Report development of fever, cough, or shortness of breath to the Health Department.

Discontinuing Quarantine or Isolation

- ◆ For people who have been isolated because they have COVID-19 coronavirus, these guidelines should continue to be followed until the Health Department says to stop.
- ◆ For people who have been quarantined, these guidelines should be followed for 14 days following exposure, provided symptoms have not developed.

Important Contact Information

- ◆ For questions about home care, isolation or quarantine, call the Health Department:
 - Call 215-685-5488 during business hours, Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 - After hours, call the COVID Information hotline at 800-722-7112.