

# Isolation instructions for patients with respiratory symptoms

If you have a fever, cough or new shortness of breath and are concerned for 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 and shortness of breath. If you have a fever, cough or shortness of breath but have not been around anyone who you know has COVID-19, the likelihood that you have COVID-19 is fairly low.

## **Should I go to my doctor and get tested for COVID-19?**

If you have any of the conditions that may increase your risk for a serious viral infection—age 60 years or over, are pregnant, or have medical conditions—call your physician’s office and ask if you need to be evaluated in person. They may want monitor your health more closely or test you for 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 very limited testing options for COVID-19 and there are 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.

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 at least 7 days, and at least 72 hours after your symptoms and fever have resolved without using fever-reducing medications.

### 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. See the CDC website FAQ’s [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 symptoms that are consistent with 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 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 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 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. 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 healthcare provider and tell them that your symptoms are consistent with COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. 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.

March 17, 2020 1:50PM