

# Guidelines for You and Others in Your Home with Known or Suspected COVID-19 Infection

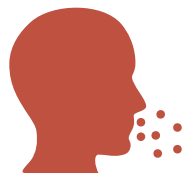


If you or someone in your home have mild symptoms that may be caused by COVID-19 and do not require hospital treatment, please follow these guidelines.

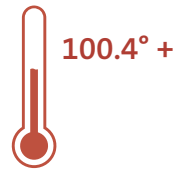
## What are the symptoms for COVID-19?

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of fever, cough, shortness of breath, runny nose, sore throat, and chest pain. For 8 out of 10 people, COVID-19 infections are mild.

### Symptoms of COVID-19 include:



Cough



Fever



Shortness of Breath

## What should you know if you are diagnosed with or suspected of having COVID-19?

- You do not need to be tested for COVID-19 if you are well enough to stay at home.
- You should stay at home unless you need to seek necessary medical care.
- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds. Use soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol).
- Avoid touching your face.
- Alert your provider if you feel that you can no longer manage your symptoms safely at home. For a medical emergency, dial 911.

# What you should do if you develop symptoms of COVID-19?

## Begin home isolation for yourself AND everyone in your household

It's very important for anyone who has symptoms to stay at home. Anyone else in the house also needs to stay at home. Staying at home will help control the spread of the virus to friends, the wider community and high-risk groups of people.



The virus usually spreads from close person-to-person contact through respiratory droplets from coughing and sneezing.

14  
days



Symptoms may develop within 14 days of exposure to the illness.

## Important things to remember when on home isolation

- Stay at home.
  - If you or a member of your household have symptoms, follow the 7+3 Guidelines for Home Isolation.
  - If you or a member of your household do not have symptoms, follow the 14-Day Self-Monitoring Period.
- Do not leave your home EXCEPT to seek medical care. Call ahead when possible. Do not go to work, school or public areas. If possible, do not leave your home even to buy food or other essentials.
- Avoid the use of public transportation, ride shares and taxis.

### 7+3 Guidelines for Home Isolation

If you have mild symptoms of COVID-19, stay at home to meet the following “7+3” conditions:

- Stay at home for at least 7 days since your symptoms first appeared, and at least 3 days after recovery. Recovery is defined as being fever-free without using fever-reducing medicines (e.g., acetaminophen) and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath).
- To see a sample timeline, see **Calendar Example 1** at the end of this document.

### 14-Day Self-Monitoring Period

All other household members who remain well must stay at home. Do not leave your home for 14 days. This 14-day period begins on the last day that you or your household member had close contact with the person showing symptoms.

- To see a sample timeline, see **Calendar Example 2** at the end of this document.

Each person in the household should do the following:

- Take your temperature at least once a day, preferably between 4 pm and 8 pm.
- Record your temperature and symptoms daily. If you develop symptoms during the 14-Day Self-Monitoring Period, stay at home and begin the 7+3 Guidelines for Home Isolation.
- Stop home isolation when you meet the 7+3 Guidelines for Home Isolation.

## Who are the high-risk groups for having serious COVID-19 infections?

- People aged 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility
- Other high-risk conditions could include:
  - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
  - People who have serious heart conditions
  - People who are immunocompromised including cancer treatment
  - People of any age with severe obesity (body mass index greater than or equal to 40) or certain underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as those with diabetes, renal failure, or liver disease might also be at risk
- People who are pregnant should be monitored since they are known to be at risk with severe viral illness, however, to date data on COVID-19 has not shown increased risk

Many conditions can cause a person to be immunocompromised, including cancer treatment, bone marrow or organ transplantation, immune deficiencies, poorly controlled HIV or AIDS, and prolonged use of corticosteroids and other immune weakening medications. If you are in the high-risk group and living with someone potentially infected with COVID-19, you should move out of the home for the duration of the home isolation period, if possible.



### Should you get tested for COVID-19?

Testing for COVID-19 is not necessary if you have mild symptoms and are well enough to stay at home.

### To feel better, follow these guidelines:

- Drink water to stay hydrated. Drink enough water so your urine (pee) is a pale clear color.
- Use over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help with some of your symptoms, unless advised otherwise by your provider. Use these medicines according to the instructions on the package or label. Do not exceed the recommended dose.
- Get plenty of rest.
- Do not engage in any strenuous activity while you are experiencing symptoms.

## When should you seek medical attention for yourself or someone in your household?

If your symptoms worsen (e.g., you experience difficulty breathing), seek prompt medical attention.



If it is not an emergency, call your provider and inform them that you or a member of your household have COVID-19 symptoms. Consider making an online medical visit with Duke Health Anywhere at [DukeHealth.org/anywhere](https://DukeHealth.org/anywhere). Your virtual visit is secure and offers answers in about 10 minutes.



If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 911. Inform the operator that you or a member of your household have COVID-19 symptoms.



Put on a facemask before you enter the facility to prevent the spread of the infection. If you do not have a facemask, request one upon arrival.

## How should you manage special situations?

We understand that it may be difficult for some members of the household to separate themselves from others at home. Follow the advice in this document to the best of your ability.

### Protecting others while you have mild COVID-19 symptoms on the 7+3 Guidelines for Home Isolation

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol) if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects you touch frequently.
- Limit the amount of time you spend in shared spaces, such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas. Keep shared spaces well ventilated.
- Aim to keep 6 feet (3 steps) away from others.
- Sleep separately from others.
- Use a separate bathroom and towels from the rest of the household, if possible.
- If you share a toilet and bathroom, it is important to clean high-touch areas such as toilet handle and faucet after each use.
- Avoid using the kitchen while others are present. Eat your meals in a separate room, if possible.
- Use a dishwasher to clean and dry your used dishes and cutlery, if available. If this is not possible, wash your items using liquid soap and warm water. Dry your items using a clean towel separate from other household members.

### Women breastfeeding while infected

- There is currently no evidence to suggest the virus is spread through breast milk.
- Infection can be spread to the baby the same way as anyone in close contact with you.
- Current evidence shows children with COVID-19 experience less severe symptoms than adults. The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh any potential risks of transmission of the virus through breast milk or by being in close contact. This is an individual decision that you can discuss with your provider.
- If you or a family member are feeding with formula or expressed milk, sterilize the equipment carefully before each use. Do not share bottles or a breast pump with someone else.

### Children living in the household

- So far, it appears that children with COVID-19 are less severely affected. It is still important to keep your child at home as outlined in the Home Isolation or Self-Monitoring Guidelines. Children should follow the same general recommendations for good hand hygiene.

### Pets

- At present, there is no evidence that companion animals or pets such as dogs and cats can be infected with COVID-19.

## What can you do to protect yourself?



### Wash your hands

- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds. Use soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol).
- When using hand sanitizer, rub your hands together until they are fully dry. Do not wipe off excess hand sanitizer.
- Soap and water should be used if your hands are visibly dirty.



### Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze into the crook of your elbow, not into your hand. Dispose of tissues into a disposable trash bag and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If you have a caregiver, they should use disposable tissues to wipe away any mucus or phlegm after you have sneezed or coughed. Dispose of tissues into a disposable trash bag and immediately wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.



### Clean high-touch surfaces

- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched using your usual household cleaning products. Detergents and bleach will be effective at getting rid of the virus on surfaces. Use cleaning products according to label instructions.
- Clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool or bodily fluids on them.
- Remember to clean surfaces such as tables, doorknobs, countertops, toilets, light switches, handles, remote controls, desks, phones, keyboards, tablets, handrails, faucets and sinks.



### Do Laundry

Dirty laundry from a person with symptoms can be washed with other people's items. For clothing, towels, linens and other items:

- Put on a pair of disposable gloves.
- Do not shake dirty laundry.
- Place laundry into washing machine.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces.
- Remove your gloves and wash your hands with soap and water before touching washing machine.
- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.