

If You Are Sick with Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

If you are sick with COVID-19, or suspect that you are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and 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.

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: Do not handle pets or other animals while sick. Although there is no evidence that companion animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19, it's always a good idea to wash your hands after being around animals, since animals can spread other diseases to people.

Call ahead before visiting your doctor.

If you have a medical appointment, call the health care provider and tell them that you have, or may have, COVID-19. This will help the health care 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) and before you enter a health care provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (e.g. 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 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 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 per cent 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 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 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 per cent 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.

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 health care provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility. These steps will help the health care provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

Ask your health care provider to call the provincial or territorial health department. Persons who are placed under active monitoring or facilitated self-monitoring should follow instructions provided by their local health department or occupational health professionals, as appropriate.

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 facemask 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 health care providers and provincial or territorial health departments.

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases. (Revised 2020, February 24). *What to do if you are sick with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)* [Canada Edit, B. Schuette, Ed.]. Retrieved 2 March 2020 from <https://www.cdc.gov>

