

Taking care of yourself when you have COVID-19 or COVID-19-like symptoms and are recovering at home

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COVID-19 is a disease that affects your lungs. Often times, the illness is mild, but for certain people, the disease can be severe and affect your breathing. It is important that if you are over 60 years old, have chronic conditions such as diabetes, kidney disease, high blood pressure or a weak immune system that you let your doctor know. Covid-19 also spreads very easily from person-to-person.

The following are instructions to take care of yourself at home when you have COVID-19 or for those who have symptoms compatible with COVID-19, but do not have testing. Of note, testing is limited.

How should you take care of yourself while you are ill?

There is no specific treatment for COVID-19. Here are several steps that may help you feel better.

1. Drink plenty of fluids
2. Rest as much as you can
3. Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to reduce fever and pain.
4. Please note that a child under the age of 2 should not be given any over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking to the doctor.
5. These medications may help you feel better. They do not cure the illness, and they do not stop you from spreading germs.
6. Do not use products or medicines promoted as "anti-COVID-19" unless approved by a health care provider. These may be dangerous and fatal.

What happens if your symptoms get worse?

If your symptoms get worse, call your doctor. If you are 60 years and older, pregnant, or have chronic diseases or a weak immune system, please let your doctor know early on when you have mild symptoms.

If you are having emergency warning signs, you should call 911. Tell the dispatch personnel that you have COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

Emergency warning signs include:

- Trouble breathing
- Can't Keep fluids down
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face
- Other serious symptoms

If it is not urgent, call your doctor. You may be able to get help by phone.

The COVID-19 outbreak may be stressful for people. If you need to speak with someone about your mental health, contact your doctor. You can also call the 24/7 SAMHSA Disaster Distress hotline at (800) 985- 5990.

What else should you do?

Stay home except to get medical care

- Stay home until:
 - o At least you have been fever free without any fever-reducing medicines for 3 days
 - o And it has been at least 7 days since your symptoms first started
 - o And most of your respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath) have gotten better.
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas
- If you do not have someone to help you, arrange for food and other necessities to be left at your door if possible.
- If you need to meet someone at the door, wear a mask
- If you must leave the home while you are sick, do not use public transportation. Use a personal vehicle if possible.
- If you cannot drive yourself, keep as much distance as possible between you and the driver. Leave the windows down and wear a mask if possible.

How can I prevent other people from getting COVID-19?

Separate yourself from other people in your home

- Stay in a separate room and away from other people as much as possible.
- Use a separate bathroom. If this is not possible, clean the bathroom after use.
- If you are with other people, wear a face mask. Have them be at least 6 feet away from you, if possible.
- Do not allow visitors and limit the number of people in your home.
- Open windows or use a fan or an air conditioner in shared spaces in the home, if possible, to ensure good air flow.
- Do not prepare food or serve others.
- Do not handle pets or other animals while you are sick.
- Do not care for children if possible.

What happens if there are people who have to be near me?

- Wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a hospital or doctor'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. If they must enter your room, they should wear a face mask. After leaving your room, they should immediately clean their hands, then remove and dispose of their facemask, and clean their hands again.

What are other things that you can do to prevent the spread of coronavirus?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, particularly after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Cover your cough and sneezes
- Avoid sharing personal household items such as dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home.
 - o Wash them thoroughly with soap and water after use.
- Clean and disinfect all “high-touch” surfaces every day. Find [information about cleaning your home here](#).

What should other people do who have been in close contact with you?

People in your house, your partners, and caregivers who were within 6 feet of you without any personal protective equipment for more than 5 minutes while you had symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, fever) are considered to be close-contacts.

Because these close-contacts have been exposed, it is possible they could also get COVID-19. They should also self-quarantine at home for 14 days from the last day of contact. Studies have shown that it can take 2- 14 days for them to show symptoms if they do develop COVID-19.

What about people who need to come in contact with you while you are sick?

It is recommended that everyone stays at least 6 feet away from you while you are recovering. Your caregivers and household contacts should wear a disposable mask and gloves if they clean your room or bathroom or come into contact with your body fluid or secretions (sweat, saliva, urine, and diarrhea). If they need to help you use the bathroom or help you get up, they should also wear a disposable gown or a robe that can be washed. They should remove and dispose of their gloves first. They should also then remove their gown/robe by touching only the inside of the gown and rolling into a bundle. They should then wash their hands, then remove and dispose of their facemasks, and clean their hands again.