



COVID-19 INFECTION CONTROL: FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS FACTSHEET

WHAT IS COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person, especially among people who are in close contact with one another, which means about 6 feet. Family members, caregivers, and other individuals may have close contact with a person who is positive for COVID-19. Those who are in close contact should monitor their health and report to a healthcare provider immediately if symptoms develop that suggest possible COVID-19 infection. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough and shortness of breath.

Reference: CDC. (28, March 2020). Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html>

INFECTION CONTROL TIPS FOR CARING FOR A PERSON WITH COVID-19

- **LIMIT EXPOSURE TO PERSON WITH COVID-19**

Limit people coming into the home to those who provide care. Restrict visitors who do not need to be in the home. When possible, have other household members stay at another home or place of residence. If this is not possible, strongly encourage the person with COVID-19 to stay in a different area or room away from others and to use a separate bathroom. If a separate bathroom is not available, disinfect the common bathroom after every use.

- **SHOULD I WEAR A MASK OR GLOVES?**

The person who is ill should wear a face mask when near other people. If the person is unable to wear a face mask, caregivers and others should wear a mask when in the same room as the person who is ill. Wear a disposable mask and gloves when touching the person or in contact with his or her body fluids. Dispose of masks and gloves after use. Do not reuse.

- **HANDWASHING**

Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

Reference: CDC. (2020, March 6). Recommended precautions for household members, intimate partners, and caregivers in a nonhealthcare setting of a patient with symptomatic laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 or a patient under investigation. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-prevent-spread.html>

- **KEEP ENVIRONMENT CLEAN**

Routinely clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces, such as a tables, countertops, doorknobs, light switches, handles, desks, toilets, faucets, sinks, phones, touch screens, remote controls, keyboards, and electronics, with household cleaners and disinfectants.

Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe and effective use. Avoid sharing household items.



- **CLEANING AND DISINFECTING**

Cleaning is the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. It does not kill the germs, but by removing them, it lowers the number of germs and the risk of spreading infection. Disinfecting involves using chemicals, such as EPA-registered disinfectants, to kill germs on surfaces. This does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove the germs. Disinfecting after cleaning kills the germs that remain on the surface to lower the risk of infection.

- **LAUNDRY CARE**

Remove and wash clothes, towels, or bed linens that have bodily fluid on them. Wear disposable gloves when handling soiled items and keep the items away from your body. If possible, do not shake the laundry, as shaking can disperse germs into the air. Use disposable gloves to place soiled items in a large plastic bag, carry the bag to the laundry area, and put items in the washing machine. Wash items using the warmest temperature recommended on the laundry care labels. Remove gloves and wash hands immediately. After laundry is washed, dry items on the warmest temperature according to the laundry care labels.

- **CARE OF DISHES AND UTENSILS**

Do not share dishes, utensils, cups, and glasses, especially with a person who is ill. Wash such items thoroughly after used or touched.

- **HANDLING TRASH**

CDC guidelines state that handling and management of trash should be completed in accordance with routine procedures, including:

- Wearing gloves
- Placing trash in designated containers
- Removing soiled gloves
- Placing gloves in designated trash bin
- Washing hands

Reference: CDC. (2020, March 28). Interim Recommendations for U.S. Households with Suspected or Confirmed Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). Retrieved from

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cleaning-disinfection.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fprepare%2Fcleaning-disinfection.html

MANAGING SYMPTOMS OF THE PERSON WITH COVID-19

Keep the person at home and as comfortable as possible. Ensure that you understand and are able to assist the person with COVID-19 to understand and follow instructions from healthcare provider related to medication and care. Help the patient with basic needs in the home and provide ongoing support for getting groceries, medications, and various personal items. Monitor the person's symptoms, and call a healthcare provider if symptoms worsen. If a medical emergency occurs, call 9-1-1 and notify the dispatcher that the person has COVID-19.



- **HOW LONG DOES A PERSON WITH COVID-19 HAVE TO REMAIN ISOLATED?**

People with COVID-19 who have stayed home can stop home isolation under the following conditions:

- No fever for 72 hours
AND
- Other symptoms have improved
AND
- 7 days since the first symptoms have appeared
- In all cases, follow the guidance of your healthcare provider and local health department.

Reference: CDC. (2020, March 21). Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>

- **MONITOR FOOD, MEDICATION AND MEDICAL SUPPLIES**

Stock up on non-perishable food to have in your home to minimize trips to the grocery store. Ensure adequate amounts of medication and medical supplies, such as oxygen, incontinence supplies, and wound care items, are available.

- How do I go grocery shopping?
 - One option is grocery delivery services.
 - Avoid direct hand-off of groceries and money by arranging to have the items delivered to your doorstep.
 - Tip electronically through an online ordering system; do not hand off cash.
 - Order earlier than normal to prevent running out of needed items.
 - If you are buying groceries in a store,
 - Go shopping at a time that is less busy.
 - Take germicide wipes to wipe the cart handle before you shop.
 - Pay by credit or debit card to prevent handing bills and coins.
 - Once you bring the groceries home,
 - Wash your hands.
 - Disinfect counters or any other surfaces you have touched.
 - Wash produce.

References:

CDC. (2020, March 30). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Steps to Prevent Getting Sick. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/get-ready.html>



Stanger, Tobie. (2020, March 26). How to Protect Yourself From Coronavirus When Grocery Shopping. Retrieved from <https://www.consumerreports.org/food-shopping/how-to-protect-yourself-from-coronavirus-when-grocery-shopping/>

CAN A PERSON WITH COVID-19 CARE FOR PETS?

Do not handle pets or any other animals when you are sick. When possible have another member of your household care for your animal when you are sick. COVID-19 is a new virus and animal transmission is not known.

Reference: CDC. (2020, March 21). Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>