



Home Care Instructions for People with Respiratory Symptoms

SEEKING MEDICAL CARE

- Symptoms of COVID-19 may include some combination of the following: fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, repeated shaking with chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell. This list of symptoms is not all inclusive. Talk to your doctor about the need for testing and isolation for these symptoms, or any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you. Make a note of when your symptoms started.
- If you develop fever, cough, shortness of breath, or your provider tells you that you are likely to have COVID-19, you should stay home (see “[Stay home, except to get medical care](#)” section below).
- Many people will have a mild illness and get better at home. If you are 65 years or older, or have a health problem such as a chronic disease or a weak immune system call your doctor early to let them know about your symptoms and to discuss if you need to be examined or tested. Make a plan with your doctor for regular check ins and discuss what to do if your symptoms get worse.
- Call your doctor if you have any questions about your illness, or if your symptoms are not going away, or are getting worse.
- If you need assistance finding a medical provider, call the Los Angeles County Information line 2-1-1, which is available 24/7. To get a test for COVID-19, call your doctor or visit covid19.lacounty.gov/testing.
- Call 911 if you have emergency warning signs. Tell dispatch personnel that you may have COVID-19.

Call 911 if there are emergency warning signs



**Difficulty
Breathing**



**Pressure or pain
in chest**



**Bluish lips
or face**



**Confused or
hard to wake**



**Other serious
symptoms**

Mental Health

COVID-19 may be stressful for people, visit publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/ to learn how to care for your mental health and support your loved ones. If you need to speak with someone about your mental health, contact your doctor or the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center 24/7 Helpline at (800) 854-7771.



Home Care Instructions for People with Respiratory Symptoms

HOME CARE

Many people will have a mild illness and get better at home. There is no specific treatment for the virus that causes COVID-19. Here are steps that you can take to help you get better:

- Rest
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Take acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to reduce fever and pain.
- Note that children younger than age 2 should not be given any over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a doctor.

Note that these medicines do not “cure” the illness and do not stop you from spreading germs.

PROTECTING OTHERS

If you develop fever, cough, shortness of breath, or your provider tells you that you are likely to have COVID-19, you should follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and your community.

Stay home, except to get medical care

- Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
Stay home until at least 10 days have passed after your symptoms first appeared AND at least 3 days after you have recovered. Recovery means that your fever is gone for 72 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications and your respiratory symptoms (e.g. cough, shortness of breath) have improved. Even if you get tested and the result is negative, you must remain at home for the full time, to prevent spreading your illness to others.
- If you must leave 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 (or face covering).
- If you do not have someone to help you, if possible, arrange for food and other necessities to be left at your door. If you need help finding social services, essential items like food and medicines call 2-1-1.

Separate yourself from other people in your home

- Stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home as much as possible. It is particularly important to stay away from people who are at higher risk of serious illness.
- Use a separate bathroom. If this is not possible, clean the bathroom after use (see below).
- Stay at least 6 feet from others.
- Open windows or use a fan or an air conditioner, if possible, in shared spaces in the home to ensure good airflow.
- Do not allow visitors and limit the number of people in your home.
- Do not handle pets or other animals.
- Do not prepare or serve food to others.





Home Care Instructions for People with Respiratory Symptoms

Wear a facemask or cloth face cover when you are around others

- 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 hospital or doctor's office. If you do not have a facemask, wear a cloth face cover – see [Guidance for Cloth Face Coverings](#) on how to use it properly. Note, a mask or cloth face cover should not be placed on anyone who has trouble breathing or is unable to remove it without assistance.
- If you are not able to wear a facemask or face cover, 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 facemask. After leaving your room, they should immediately clean their hands, then remove and dispose of their facemask, and clean their hands again.

Use masks and face covers with caution with children.

Infants and children under 2 should not wear cloth face coverings. Those between the ages of 2 and 8 should use them but under adult supervision to ensure that the child can breathe safely and avoid choking or suffocation.

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.

Avoid sharing personal household items

Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. Wash them thoroughly with soap and water after use.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often and thoroughly, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.

Clean and disinfect all “high-touch” surfaces every day

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean and disinfect any surfaces that may have body fluids on them. Use household cleaning and disinfectant sprays or wipes, according to the product label instructions. See cleaning instructions in [Preventing the spread of respiratory illness in the home](#).



Home Care Instructions for People with Respiratory Symptoms

TALK TO YOUR CLOSE CONTACTS

Quarantine

Be sure to tell all of your close contacts that they need to be in quarantine for 14 days after their last contact with you.

The term “close contact” applies to all household members, intimate contacts, caregivers, and individuals with any of the following exposures to you while you are infectious*:

- a. Presence within 6 feet of you for more than 10 minutes, or
- b. Unprotected contact with your body fluids and/or secretions, for example, being coughed or sneezed on, sharing utensils or saliva, or providing care without wearing appropriate protective equipment. Appropriate protective equipment means gloves and a facemask because cloth face coverings do not provide enough protection for an individual who is caring for you.

*You are considered to be infectious from 48 hours before your symptoms first appeared (or from the date of your positive lab test if you did not have symptoms) until you are no longer required to be isolated (see “[Stay home](#)” section above)

Your close contacts should self-quarantine even if they feel well because it can take 2– 14 days for them to show symptoms. See the [Home quarantine guidance for those exposed to COVID-19](#).

Cleaning

Your caregivers and household contacts should wear a disposable facemask and gloves if they clean your room or bathroom or come into contact with your body fluids, and/or secretions (such as sweat, saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine, or diarrhea). They should remove and dispose of their gloves first, clean their hands, then remove and dispose of their facemask, and clean their hands again. See cleaning instructions in [Preventing the spread of respiratory illness in the home](#).