

When Someone at Home Gets COVID-19

Public health authorities note that persons with COVID-19 who don't require hospitalization should stay home. However, that leaves others in the household more vulnerable, so additional precautions are needed. Try to have a plan in place for handling illness before someone becomes sick, and share the plan with others in your household.

Provide Symptom Treatment

- Make sure the sick person drinks plenty of fluids to stay hydrated and rests at home.
- Over-the-counter medicines may help with symptoms.
- For *most people*, symptoms last a few days and get better after a week.

Home Ventilation and Good Airflow

When a person is sick with coronavirus, they release the virus into the environment through coughing or just breathing. To minimize risk of transmission, the CDC recommends having good airflow or ventilation. This could take the form of an air conditioning system or simply opening a window.

Designate Personal Space

- Reduce social contact, the duration of contact, and the environmental space shared with a sick person on a day-to-day basis.
- Do not share a bedroom. By itself, a bed is a surface where a sick person can spread the coronavirus with just a sneeze or a cough.
- Have the sick person use their own designated bathroom so no one else in the house is exposed to contaminated surfaces, such as faucets, sink counters, toilets and door knobs. Bathrooms have surfaces touched on a daily basis and are relatively small, increasing the risk of exposure.
- In the event that designating a separate bathroom is not possible, routine cleaning is necessary. Be sure to wipe down faucets, handles, doorknobs, and other high touch surfaces in the bathroom. Wearing gloves while cleaning is recommended.

Other Ways to Limit Contact

Wear disposable gloves when touching the ill person, their environment, and soiled items or surfaces.

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Serving Food While Social Distancing

- Washing hands and disinfecting kitchen surfaces are common practices in the kitchen, even if no one is sick in the house.
- Frequently clean all kitchen surfaces.
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, or silverware with the sick person.
- Leave food by the door so the patient can retrieve it, or leave it for them to come eat in the kitchen (caregivers can enter the room as long as the patient is wearing a mask).

If a Caregiver Becomes Sick

- Have an emergency preparedness plan
 - Identify friends and family who can fill in and support.
 - Make a list of emergency contacts for the person in your care. This can include family, friends, neighbors, drivers, healthcare providers or other resources.
 - Make a list of local organizations your household can contact for information, services, support, and resources.
- Make a "how-to" guide for the fill-in caregiver
 - List what medications your loved one takes and when.
 - Note if the person has any dietary restrictions.
 - Write down any other special instructions.

When Home Isolation Can Stop

- If the sick person has not had a test (all three must be met)
 - They have had no fever for at least 72 hours (without using medications to reduce fevers).
 - Other symptoms have improved (i.e. no cough or shortness of breath).
 - At least 7 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared
- If the sick person has been tested (all three must be met)
 - They no longer have fever (without using medications to reduce fever).
 - Other symptoms have improved (i.e. no cough or shortness of breath).
 - Have received two negative tests in a row 24 hour apart (*If they have been tested, their doctor will follow the CDC guidelines).