

Information for Suspected Cases of COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) and their Household Contacts Isolated at Home

You are suspected of having COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) and have been tested. You may be infectious with 2019-nCoV and able to pass it on to other people.

You need to remain in isolation until tests results are available, but you are well enough to be isolated at home. Your household contacts (the people you live with) also need to stay at home in isolation because they may be becoming unwell with COVID-19 as well.

You and your household contacts are expected to follow the important instructions below.

1. Stay at Home

You and the person you are caring for should stay in your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transport, Uber or taxis until you have been told that is safe to do so. Do not visit people in hospital or attend hospital outpatient appointments.

You will need to ask for help if you require groceries, other shopping or medications. Alternatively, you can order by phone or online. The delivery instruction needs to state that the items are to be left outside, on the porch, or as appropriate for your home.

2. Separate yourself from other people in your home*

Stay in a well-ventilated room with a window to outside that can be opened, separate from other people in your home. Keep the door closed. Use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household if you can.

If you live in shared accommodation (university halls of residence, a hostel or similar) with a shared kitchen, bathroom(s) and living area, you should stay in your room with the door closed, only coming out when necessary, wearing a facemask if you have one. If you share a kitchen avoid using this while others are using it if possible, and take meals back to your room to eat. If you can, use a dishwasher to wash your used dishes.

If possible, limit the number of people in your household who are providing care to those who are sick. For example, have one person caring for any sick children and another person caring for those who are well. This will help reduce the risk of spreading the virus to others in the household.

3. Call ahead before visiting your doctor

Most people with COVID-19 have a mild illness but some people become unwell enough to need to be in hospital. **If you become more unwell, especially if you are having difficulty breathing or chest pain, you should seek medical attention urgently.** Please call your GP or after hours clinic first and say that you have been tested for coronavirus. If you think you need to go to hospital, call St John Ambulance on 111. You can also phone Healthline on **0800 358 5453** for advice 24 hours a day.

If someone you live with, or anyone you have recently had a lot of contact with, develops any of these symptoms, they should also call their GP or Healthline on **0800 358 5453** for advice:

- **fever, chills or sweats,**
- **cough,**
- **shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.**

If they need to see a doctor they should call ahead first and say they have been exposed to COVID-19.

4. Wear a facemask if advised to

If you have been provided with facemasks, then you should wear the mask when you are in the same room with other people and when you visit a healthcare provider. If you cannot wear a facemask, the people who live with you should wear one while they are in the same room with you. Household contacts who are well do not need to wear a face mask unless they are in the same room as the person who is unwell.

5. Wash your hands

Regular hand washing is the best way to avoid getting COVID-19. Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds, rinse and dry thoroughly. Everyone in the home should be encouraged to wash their hands regularly. The same applies to those caring for anyone that is being tested for 2019-nCoV. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Hand sanitiser can also be used.

6. Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of tissues into a plastic waste bag, and immediately wash your hands. Carers should wash their hands as well if helping the person they are caring for following coughing or sneezing.

7. Avoid sharing household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with other people in your home when you have used them (or after your child or the person you are caring for has used them). After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water; dishwashers may be used to clean crockery and cutlery.

8. Do not have visitors in your home

Only those who live in your home should be allowed to stay. Do not invite or allow visitors to enter. If you are being visited at home for healthcare, let the person know you have been tested for COVID-19. If it is urgent to speak to someone who is not a member of your household, do this over the phone.

What will happen if tests come back negative?

The person who tested you is expected to contact you with your test results. If test results come back negative then you do not have COVID-19 at the moment. You and your household contacts no longer need to stay in isolation unless

- someone else in your home has been confirmed with the virus,
- you are in self-isolation because you recently returned from mainland China. You should continue to stay in isolation until 14 days after you left China.

You may still feel unwell with a respiratory illness (cold, flu or pneumonia) and should seek care if your illness worsens or you are worried.

What will happen if tests confirm novel coronavirus?

If tests confirm novel coronavirus you will need to stay in isolation. Other people in your household and people you have had a lot of contact with may also need to be in isolation. Public Health will be in touch with you to give advice.

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