

Keeping Family Safe If You Have COVID-19

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Healthcare Workers

If I have COVID-19, can I be at home with my family?

Yes, you can be at home with your family if you are sick with COVID-19, but you will need to follow strict hygiene and distancing processes to avoid getting others sick (see below). Because the incubation period for COVID-19 can range from 2-14 days, it is possible that your family has already been exposed to the virus by the time you were diagnosed, but it is still important to follow the recommendations below in case they have not. If you got the virus from a family member, then anyone in your family that was sick is likely to be immune and will not get sick again from you.

I have COVID-19 symptoms – how can I protect my family and others?

The CDC has a number of helpful resources to guide you through your illness and we strongly recommend you visit this website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>. The following steps should be followed by you and your household members to minimize the risk of transmission within the home.

Remember, COVID-19 is transmitted in one of two ways:

- Direct droplet spray from a sick person into the eyes, nose, or mouth of another person
- Touching something contaminated with the virus and then eating or touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unclean hands. This happens when the sick person touches something which someone else then touches and transfers the virus to their eyes, nose, or mouth because they do not wash their hands. Remember that the virus often lives several hours, sometimes 1 or 2 days, on surfaces.

1. Physically Separate Yourself From Others

- Stay in a different room from others in your home
- Keep a 6-foot distance from others in the home as much as possible
- Do not hug, kiss, or touch others while you are sick
- If available, use a separate bathroom
- Stay at home except for serious medical care that might require hospitalization.
 - Do not leave home to go to work, public areas, shopping, and do not use public transportation or taxis.
 - If you need groceries or supplies, ask family, friends, or neighbors bring it to you and leave it outside your door.

2. Follow Strict Hygiene Practices to Minimize Transmission

- You and all your household members should wash hands frequently. Use soap or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (with 60 to 95% alcohol) often, including before and after touching your face or touching any other object someone else may need to touch (e.g. door handle, refrigerator). Be sure to cover all surfaces of your hands, including the fingertips.

DOCUMENT AUTHORED DATE: 4/5/20

- If you are sick, everything you touch should be cleaned before someone else touches it. Or, if someone else must touch something you touched (e.g. bringing plates out of your room), they need to wash their hands after they finish the activity and before they touch their face.
- If you are sick, wear a mask if you are in the same room as others. If you are unable to wear a mask, avoid being in the same room with others as much as possible and have your housemates wear a face mask when they are around you.
- Everyone should avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue, or sneeze into your sleeve
- Do not share household items (e.g., utensils, drinking glasses, towels, bedding) and either wash right away with soap/detergent after you use them, or ensure that after someone does the dishes, they wash their hands before touching their face.
- Caregivers can use gloves whenever handling or cleaning soiled items that may contain your secretions or body fluids. If gloves are not available, clean hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling any contaminated items.

3. Keep the Environment Clean

- Household cleaning sprays and wipes can be used to kill COVID-19. Alcohol hand rub (60-95%) will also work.
- Use a disinfectant cleaner to clean things that you touch that others may touch
 - Examples include: counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables that are touched by the person who is sick or someone caring for the sick person who touches these objects with unclean hands
- Immediately clean any surfaces that may have oral/nasal secretions, blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
- Wash clothes/linens thoroughly – over-the-counter laundry detergent will kill the virus. Dry thoroughly using the temperatures recommended on the linen/clothing label.
- If weather permits, air out rooms when the sick person is not in the room.

What if I live with someone who is immunocompromised or elderly?

People who have chronic illnesses, are immunocompromised, or ≥ 65 years old are at higher risk for serious complications from COVID-19. In addition to strict adherence to the above strategies, you can also consider additional steps to avoid contact with vulnerable household members' environment or touched objects as much as possible. These high-risk individuals can also consider masking while in the house with a COVID-infected person. If they mask, they should be careful to only touch the mask or their face after washing their hands with soap or using alcohol hand rub. Another option is for high-risk persons to temporarily live with someone else until the COVID-infected person is fully recovered without symptoms for at least 10 days. However, if a high-risk individual has already been in contact with the ill person at the time they move out, they will still need to be attentive for any symptoms of COVID-19 for the next 14 days.

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Do I need to move out of the house?

Whether the ill person or others in the home move out of the house is dependent on available opportunities to them. Ultimately, this is a personal decision.

When will I be able to come back to work?

Return to work will be determined by Occupational Health (714-456-8300) on a case-by-case basis according to the following general principles:

- 1) Occupational Health will determine whether symptoms fall into the two categories
 - a. Symptoms Likely COVID-19 Related
 - i. Testing will be offered based upon current COVID testing algorithm
 - ii. Regardless of testing result, CDC guidance will be employed for return to work
 - (1) At least 3 days (72 hours) since last fever (without using fever-reducing medications) and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath)
 - AND**
 - (2) At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared, and worker well enough and willing to return to work while wearing a mask at work for next 7 days. Otherwise, worker to remain off work for up to 14 days or until recovered.
- b. Symptoms Unlikely COVID-19 Related
 - i. Usual Occupational Health working well policy applies

