

## **Protecting Yourself from the Coronavirus in the Community**

To prevent becoming ill, avoid being exposed to this virus. As of now, there is no vaccination to prevent this disease called COVID-19.

The disease is thought to spread by being within 6 feet of a person who has it and through the small droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes and lands in the mouth or nose of someone nearby or possible by that person breathing it in. It may also last up to 17 days on surfaces. If you touch your face after touching these infected surfaces, you could then become infected.

### **To protect yourself:**

- 1) Washing your hands often for at least 20 seconds, especially after being out in public, blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. If no soap and water handy, use a hand sanitizer that contains 60% alcohol. Cover your whole hands and rub until they feel dry.
- 2) Don't touch your eye, nose or mouth with unwashed hands.
- 3) Avoid close contact with people who are sick. The problem is that people may be sick but not know it because they may not have any symptoms. If you are at higher risk of getting very sick because you have asthma or other conditions, it is best to assume everyone may be sick.
- 4) In your house, clean and then disinfect surfaces that are touched a lot like tables, doorknobs, light switches, phones, keyboards, faucets, and so on. You can use most common EPA registered household disinfectants or use household bleach. Use 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) for one gallon of water. Other cleaning solutions should have at least 70% alcohol.

Visit <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/list-n-disinfectants-use-against-sars-cov-2> to find the current list of products that meet EPA's criteria for use against SARS-CoV-2, the cause of COVID-19.

If you are homeless:

Try to make you encampment, tent, sleeping place, 12 feet away from another encampment.

Try to find a bathroom that has soap and water and towels to dry your hands.

Seek shelter that has these facilities and where you can receive care. Shelters have received information on the best way to safeguard you and help you if you are or become sick.

### **To protect others:**

Stay home if you are sick, except to get medical care. If you have a mild case, you can recover at home.

Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing or use the inside of your elbow. Throw the used tissue in the trash. Washing your hands.

Wear a facemask if you can find one when around other people in a room or car or before entering the doctor's office, clinic or hospital. You don't need a face mask otherwise unless you are caring for someone who is sick who themselves cannot wear a mask because they have trouble breathing.

Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, utensils, towels and bedding with others in your home. Clean these items after use.

**To know if you become sick:**

*The emergency warning signs for COVID-19 that require medical attention include:*

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

\*This list is not all. A medical provider can let you know if other symptoms you may have are severe or concerning.

**If you are sick:**

Stay home except to get medical care. Call before you get medical care. Get care if you feel worse or think it is an emergency or you have trouble breathing.

If you call 911 for a medical emergency, alert them that you may have COVID-19 and if possible put on face mask before they arrive.

If you can, avoid public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Isolate yourself in your home. Stay in your room, use a separate bathroom if available.

Stay away from your pets if you can. Although so far, pets have not been infected, experts aren't ready to say it is safe to be close to them if you are sick. If you have to care for pets, wash your hands before and after contact.

**To end home isolation:**

People with COVID-19 who have stayed home (home isolated) can stop home isolation under the following conditions: *If you will not have a test to determine if you are still contagious*, you can leave home after these three things have happened: You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers) AND other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved) AND at least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared. *If you will be tested to determine if you are still contagious*, you can leave home after these three things have happened: You no longer have a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers) AND other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved) AND you received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart.

Your doctor will follow these [CDC guidelines](#) regarding release from quarantine.