

## Viral Infections

### Home Care Instructions for Suspected COVID-19 Patients

Emergency Medical Services evaluated you today for an apparent viral respiratory infection (i.e. influenza, COVID-19, or other common respiratory viruses). At this time, your illness does not require you to go to an emergency department. Your vital signs are within acceptable ranges, which include, your heart rate, breathing rate, blood pressure, and oxygen level.

It is important you continue to treat your symptoms, monitor your own condition, and take steps to prevent spreading the infection to others.

You should follow the steps below:

- **Stay home except to get medical care.** Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.
- **Drink plenty of fluids** to stay very well-hydrated. Drink non-carbonated fluids. Avoid alcohol.
- **Take over-the-counter medications you would traditionally use as needed for fever or body aches, unless you have previously been told not to use this medicine.** Follow the recommended dosing instructions according to the label.
- **Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home.**
  - As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- **If you need follow-up care, call your healthcare provider before going there.** Call your healthcare provider and tell them you have or may have the flu, COVID-19, or similar respiratory illness. Advise your healthcare provider you called 9-1-1, were screened by EMS and a medical command physician, and told at that time you may remain at home. Your healthcare provider may arrange a follow-up visit with you in-person or via telehealth. Alerting your healthcare provider in this way will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.
- **Wear a facemask**, if you have one, when you are around other people (i.e. sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- **Cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or use a tissue and then throw the tissue in the trash.**
- **Clean your hands often.** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom, before eating, and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Avoid sharing personal household items** (i.e. dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding) with other people or pets. After using, wash them thoroughly.
- **Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces** using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.

*Recommendations related to COVID-19 may change over time.*

*Please check the CDC website for updates on home quarantine, preventing disease spread, and treatment:*

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/index.html>

## **Monitor your Symptoms**

If you are in any way worsening, please seek care by contacting your doctor, going to an urgent care center, going to your nearest emergency department, or calling 9-1-1 for further evaluation and treatment of your condition. This could include, but is not limited to:

- **High or persistent fevers, vomiting, trouble breathing or shortness of breath, coughing up blood, severe headaches, neck pain/stiffness, or any new or worsening symptoms or concerns.**
- **If you unable to walk or you are experiencing shortness of breath limiting your ability to go by private car, please call 9-1-1.**

**Before seeking care**, call your healthcare provider, if possible, and tell them you have a respiratory infection. Put on a facemask before you enter the facility.

**If you have a medical emergency and need to call 9-1-1**, notify the operator you have a respiratory infection, EMS has responded once to you regarding your symptoms, and EMS advised to call back if my condition worsened. If possible, put on a facemask before EMS arrives.

## **Discontinuing Home Isolation**

**If your doctor or local health department advises you to remain on home isolation precautions**, please contact them for advice for when it is appropriate to discontinue this and resume normal daily activities.

**If you have not been advised about home isolation precautions by your doctor or local health department**, please stay home when you are sick and until there is no fever for a minimum of 72 hours without medicine like Tylenol, Motrin, or Advil.

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