

# You may have a Viral Illness or COVID-19

## What You Must Know to Protect Yourself and Others

**Based on your symptoms, you have a viral illness or Coronavirus (COVID-19).**

Read over the information in this packet.

These instructions will help you know what to do to **help keep the COVID-19 virus from spreading to other people in your household and community.**



Table of Contents	Page
10 Ways to Manage Your Health At Home When You Have a Viral Illness	2
At Home Care for Possible Viral Illness or COVID-19	3 - 4
Precautions for Household Members, Intimate Partners and Caregivers	5 - 6
Handwashing Instructions	7

Content adapted from Centers for Disease Control and Micromedex Carenotes™.  
Health Literacy and Plain Language Translation by Urban Health Initiative  
Office of Diversity, Inclusion and Equity 4-24-2020

# 10 Ways to Manage Your Health At Home When You Have a Viral Illness

**1. Stay home** from work, school, and away from other public places if you have symptoms.

If you must go out, try not to use public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.



**7. Wash your hands often.**

Use with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

You can also clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.



**2. Watch for symptoms.**

If your symptoms get worse, call your doctor. If you do not have a doctor, call our hotline at (773) 702-2800.



**8. Stay in a separate room and away from other people in your home.**

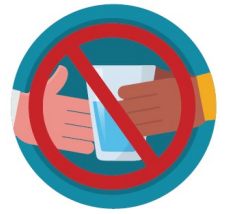
Use a different bathroom. If you need to be around other people wear a facemask.



**3. Get rest and stay hydrated.**



**9. Do not share personal items** with other people in your home including dishes, towels, and bedding.



**4. If you have a medical appointment, call the doctor ahead of time.**

Tell them that you have or may have a viral illness.



**10. Clean all surfaces that are touched often.**

This includes counters, tabletops, and doorknobs.



**5. For a medical emergency call 911 or go to your local emergency department.**



Use household cleaning sprays and follow the label instructions.

Go to [www.cdc.gov/covid19-symptoms](http://www.cdc.gov/covid19-symptoms) for information on COVID-19 symptoms.

**6. Cover your cough and sneezes.**



For more information related to COVID-19 go to: [www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

UChicago Medicine COVID-19 Hotline  
(773) 702-2800

# At Home Care for Possible Viral Illness or COVID-19

**You have a viral syndrome.** This may include symptoms like muscle aches, fevers, chills, runny nose, cough, sneezing, sore throat, throwing up or diarrhea (watery stools).

- One possible virus you may have is SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, also known as the novel coronavirus.
- The virus you have may be a different infection such as the common cold or flu.
- Most patients with COVID-19 have mild symptoms and recover on their own. Resting, staying hydrated, and sleeping are often helpful.
- The elderly or anyone with serious medical issues may have worse symptoms.
- If your general health is well, you will be able to go home and treat your symptoms with liquids by mouth and medicines for fever, cough and pain.

## COVID-19 Testing

- If you had a COVID 19 test, we will have the results in a few days.
- If you have MyChart, the results will be there within 48 hours of your lab test.
- A member of our care team may call you. We cannot leave the results on voicemail.

## Precautions When Seeking Care at a Healthcare Facility

**Get medical attention right away if your illness gets worse** including having a fever or having a hard time breathing.

- Call the doctor or emergency room ahead of time.
- Put on a facemask before you enter the emergency room or clinic.
- Put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive at your home.
- These steps will help the doctor's office keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

## Staying at Home

- **Do not leave your home, except to get medical care.** Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Do not use public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.
- **Do not have contact with other people or animals in your home.** This is so you will not spread this infection. Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom.
- **You must self-isolate for at least 7 days after your symptoms have gone away.**
- Wait for at least a week and several more days after you feel well before returning to your regular activities, work or school.

# At Home Care for Possible Viral Illness or COVID-19

## Precautions at Home

- **If you get sicker you may need to go back to the Emergency Department or contact your doctor for another exam.**
  - **This includes having symptoms of a hard time breathing, chest pain, not able to eat or drink much, throwing up, diarrhea (watery stools) or feeling weak.**
- **Do not share personal household items** including dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, wash them really well with soap and water.
- **Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.**
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.** Throw used tissues in a lined trash can and then wash your hands with soap and water right away for at least 20 seconds or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.** If you do not have soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.
  - Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
  - Soap and water must be used if you can see dirt of your hands.

## Cleaning Your Home

- **Clean high touch surfaces every day.** This includes counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
- Clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
- Use a household cleaning spray or wipe to clean surfaces. Follow the instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaner. This includes precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good air ventilation when using the product.

## Resources for More Information

### Illinois Department of Health websites:

[https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/health\\_protection\\_and\\_response/svcs/2019-novel-coronavirus--2019-ncov-.html](https://www.chicago.gov/city/en/depts/cdph/provdrs/health_protection_and_response/svcs/2019-novel-coronavirus--2019-ncov-.html)

### Centers for Disease control (CDC) Corona Website:

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

**For more questions:** Talk with your state or local health department or your doctor.

**You can also contact UChicago Medicine COVID-19 Hotline at (773) 702-2800**

# Precautions for Viral Illness or COVID-19

## At Home Instructions for Household Members, Intimate Partners and Caregivers

These precautions are for **anyone who may have close contact in a non-healthcare setting with a patient who has lab confirmed symptoms of COVID-19** or a person being checked for COVID-19 or with another viral illness such as the flu

For more information go to: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/risk-assessment.html)

## Close Contacts Must Follow These Recommendations

**To care for and support the patient with COVID-19 symptoms or other respiratory viral illnesses, you must:**

- Understand and help them follow their doctor's instructions for medications and care.
- Help the patient with basic household needs and provide support for getting groceries, prescriptions, and other personal needs.
- **Keep watch of the patient's symptoms. Get help if the patient is getting sicker.**
  - If your loved one has been confirmed to have COVID-19, call their doctor and tell them that the patient has lab confirmed COVID-19. This will help the doctor's office take steps to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected. Ask the doctor to call the local or state health department for more guidance.
  - If the patient has a medical emergency and you need to call 911, tell the person on the phone that the patient has, or is being checked for COVID-19.
- Be sure shared spaces in the home have good air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window when there is good weather.
- Do not have visitors who do not have to be in the home.
- Care for any pets in the home. Anyone who is sick must not handle pets or other animals. This is to prevent the spread of infection.

## Keep Watch of Your Own Health

- Call your doctor right away if you develop symptoms of COVID-19 such as a fever, cough or shortness of breath.
- **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has 60 to 95 percent alcohol.
  - Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
  - Soap and water must be used if you see dirt on the hands.
- **Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.**
- Stay in another room and **be separated from the patient as much as possible.**
- Use a separate bedroom and bathroom.

# Precautions for Viral Illness or COVID-19

## At Home Instructions for Household Members, Intimate Partners and Caregivers

### To Protect Yourself and Others

- **Do not share household items with the patient.** Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After the patient uses these items, wash them very well (see below “Washing Laundry”).
- **Clean all “high-touch” surfaces,** such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
- Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels have instructions for safe and the best use of the cleaning product. This includes precautions you must take when putting on the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good air ventilation when using the product.

### Masks and Personal Protective Equipment

- **If you have masks available, the patient is the one that needs to wear the facemask when around other people.** If the patient is not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), the caregiver must wear a mask when in the same room as the patient. If you do not have masks, try to maintain a distance of 6 feet as much as possible.
- Wear a disposable facemask and gloves when you touch or have contact with a patient’s blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, sputum, nose mucus, throw-up or urine.
- Throw out disposable facemasks and gloves after using them. Do not reuse.
- **When removing personal protective equipment:** First remove and dispose of gloves. Then clean your hands right away with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Next, remove and dispose of facemask, and clean your hands right away again with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Place all used disposable gloves, facemasks, and other contaminated items in a lined container before throwing them out with other household waste. Clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer right away after handling these items. Soap and water must be used if see dirt on hands.

### Washing Laundry

- Remove and wash clothes or bedding right away that has blood, stool, or body fluids on it.
- Wear disposable gloves when touching soiled items and keep soiled items away from your body. Clean your hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer right away after removing your gloves.
- Read and follow directions on labels of laundry or clothing items and detergent. You can use normal laundry detergent according washing machine instructions and dry very well using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.

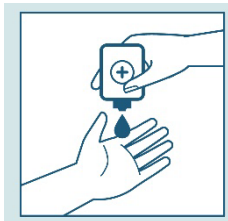
**For more questions:** Talk with your state or local health department or your doctor.  
**You can also contact UChicago Medicine COVID-19 Hotline at (773) 702-2800.**

# Handwashing Instructions

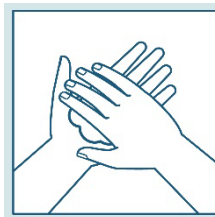
Help keep the COVID-19 virus from spreading to other people in your household and community.

- **Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.**
- **Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.**  
Throw used tissues in a lined trash can and then wash your hands with soap and water right away for at least 20 seconds or with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.**
- If you do not have soap and water, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol.
- Soap and water must be used if you can see dirt of your hands

## How to Use Hand Sanitizer



Apply hand sanitizer on palm of one hand



Rub hands together



Cover all surfaces until hands feel dry (20 seconds)

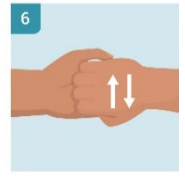
## How to Wash Your Hands



Wet hands and apply soap



Rub front and back of hands together



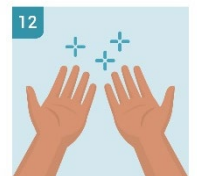
Scrub between fingers and rub back of fingers on other palm



Clean thumbs and wash fingernails and finger tips



Rinse hands then dry with a single use towel



Use towel to shut off water. Your hands are now clean