

# A CORONAVIRUS GUIDE FOR AT HOME CARE

HOW TO HELP SOMEONE WHO HAS COVID-19 AT HOME

*Last Update: 9 April 2020*

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## BEGINNING HOME CARE

### Should I Begin Home Care?



Have you or someone you live with...



...been in **contact** with the virus?

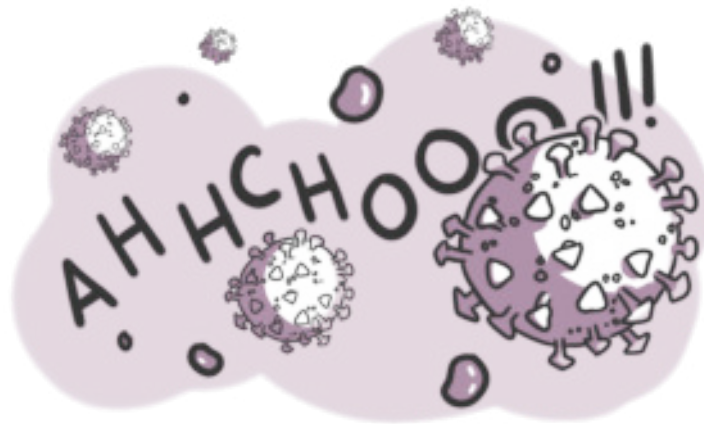
...Or have any **symptoms**?

- Fever
- Dry Cough
- Tightness in the chest



If the answer is yes to either of these, **it's time to prepare for and begin home care!**

The virus can spread through **droplets in the air** like those from coughs, sneezes, and from even speaking...



...so it's best to **stay home as soon as possible** when symptoms appear to prevent spreading germs to others. During these times, you should try to stay home as much as possible even if you feel well to prevent getting sick and spreading germs in case you have COVID-19 and don't have symptoms yet.

### What to Do First

- ☒ Call those the patient has been in **contact with within the past 14 days**



- ☒ **No visitors**



☒ **Don't leave** the house

Use delivery or other services  
for food



If the patient has to leave the house, they should **try not to touch common surfaces with their hands**, like elevator buttons or doorknobs



Use an elbow, mittens, or napkins!

## HOW TO DO HOME CARE

### Taking Care of the Patient

Your first job is to take care until you or whoever is sick gets better!

1. Keep **hydrated**.

E.g. Soup, water, and sports drinks



2. **Start keeping notes.** Write down the patient's temperature and note how they feel on a piece of paper, or in a notes app on a phone. Do this every day while the patient has symptoms. It will help if you need to call a doctor later.

3. Get lots of **rest**!



Other than this, **there isn't much you can do** other than keep the person who is sick as comfortable as possible as they recover, and to watch if symptoms become worse. If they become worse, you may need to go to the **doctor or emergency room**.

## Lifestyle Changes

It is also very important to protect others in the house from becoming sick. Here are some things you can do to keep everyone in your home well.

1. **Isolate the patient.** Try to keep the patient's room, bed, and bathroom separate from others.



If you must share a space with the patient (like the bathroom or kitchen), **go in rotation** with you using it last. Thoroughly clean the space **before you use them**.

2. Caregivers should **move their own items elsewhere** and **disinfect** them with soapy water if needed.



3. **Use the dishwasher** if you have one, with heated drying on if possible.



4. Use your own stuff! **Don't share** food or household items with the patient.



5. **Keep windows open** when possible to help change the air in the room.



## HYGIENE IN THE HOME

### Personal Health Equipment

Patients should **wear a face mask**, and caregivers should too if they have one and are in the same room.



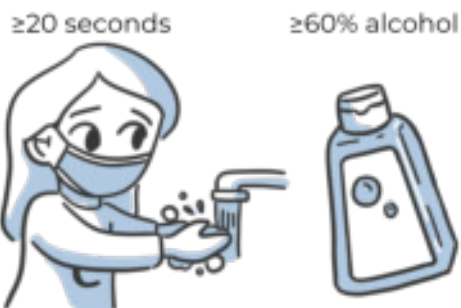
Caregivers should wear a **face mask and gloves** when coming into contact with any of the patient's bodily fluids.

When finished...

1. Remove and throw away gloves. If they are reusable kitchen gloves, wash thoroughly.



2. Wash hands with soap and water, or hand sanitizer





3. Then remove and throw away the face mask. If it is a reusable cloth mask, wash thoroughly.



4. Wash hands with soap and water, or hand sanitizer again

≥20 seconds

≥60% alcohol



**Do not reuse disposable face masks or gloves.** Throw these out with any other contaminated items into a lined container before disposing of them with other household waste. **If you are using reusable masks or gloves**, be sure to clean them thoroughly and often after use. Always clean your hands after handling these objects!



## Guide to Cleaning

Clean all "high-touch" surfaces.



### 2x Daily

- ☒ Counters
- ☒ Tabletops
- ☒ Toilets
- ☒ Sinks
- ☒ Doorknobs
- ☒ Phones
- ☒ Keyboards
- ☒ Tablets
- ☒ Bedside tables...
- etc.

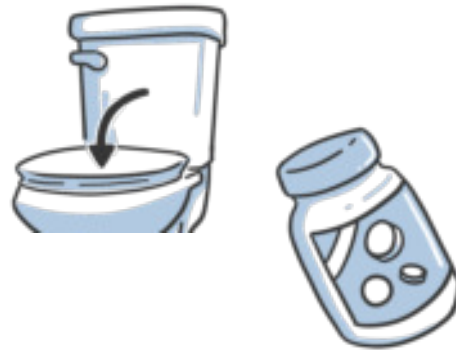
Also, clean any surfaces that may have **blood, poop, or body fluids** on them.

**Soapy water and paper towels**, and household **cleaning wipes** and **sprays** work well!



***With the bathroom...***

- **Clean** every day!
- **Close the lid** before you flush
- Put **bleach tablets** in toilet tank if you can



***With the laundry...***

**Immediately remove** and **thoroughly wash** clothes or bed sheets that have blood, poop, or body fluids on them.

Be sure to **wear disposable or reusable rubber gloves** while handling soiled items and keep soiled items away from your body. **Clean your hands** immediately after removing your gloves.



**DON'T shake dirty laundry**



Shaking laundry may increase the chances for the virus to enter and travel through the air.



**DO wash items following the clothing's washing instructions**



It is also okay to wash other people's items with the dirty laundry that has been in contact with an ill person.



**DO wait to wash your clothes after home isolation**



If you do not have a washing machine, **wait 72 hours** after your isolation period has ended before taking your laundry out for washing.

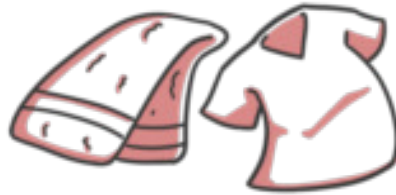
## HOW TO PREPARE

If you have time before starting home care, here's what you can do to prepare.

### Other Key Cleaning Tools

#### *Paper Towels and Rags*

Paper towels work great, but if you run out, you can always make some rags out of things you already have! (i.e. **kitchen towels** or an **old t-shirt**)

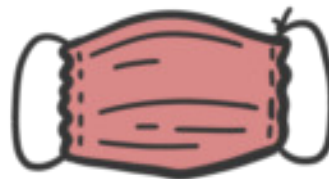


Enough rags for **two full days** will let you cycle in a new set each morning as you properly wash the previous day's rags of germs.

#### *Reusable Cloth Masks*

Disposable surgical masks and respirators **are in short supply for healthcare workers**. If you don't already have them, **don't buy them**. You can make a [cloth mask](#) at home! Just make sure they:

1. Fit snugly but comfortably against the face
2. Have ties or ear loops to keep the mask on
3. Include multiple layers of fabric
4. Are breathable
5. Are machine washable and dryable without damage or change to shape



Make sure you wash these well and often after use. **Save the surgical masks for hospitals; they need it most.**

### ***Kitchen Gloves***

Disposable gloves are also **in short supply for healthcare workers**. If you don't already have them, **buy reusable rubber or silicone gloves** instead. They will work at keeping your hands clean as long as you clean them well after you use them.



### ***A Bucket***

Use it as a portable station to hold your soapy water when you wash down door handles and surfaces. You can also use the bucket to wash your rags if you don't have a laundry machine at home.



### ***Dish Soap or Other Soap***

Soap will kill the virus and remove it from your hands or surfaces.



## **Preparing for the Hospital**

### ***A Hospital Go-Bag***

In the case someone's symptoms get worse and they need to go to the hospital, be sure to pack what you need ahead of time. Here's what that might look like:

Health insurance documents



Notes about your symptoms



A phone and charger



Things to keep you comfortable



\*Excess surgical masks and respirators



\*You may be able to donate these to hospital workers and patients in need when you go

## BIG QUESTIONS

*What about my pet(s)?*

**Limit contact with all animals.**

Have **someone else** take care of your pet if possible.

If you cannot, **wash your hands** before and after, and **wear a mask** and **limit contact** with the pet at all times.

*When should I call a doctor?*

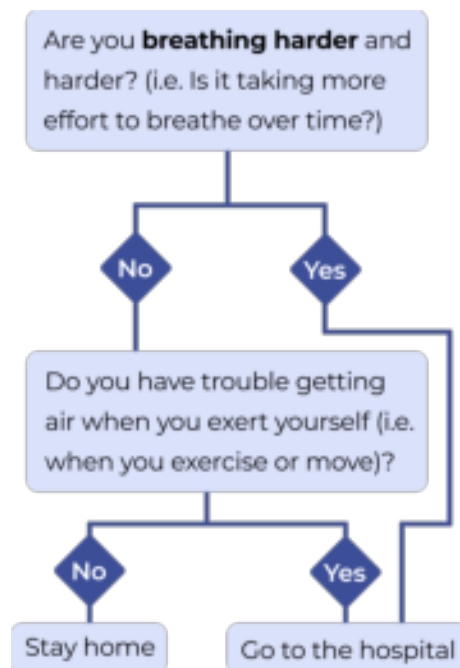
**If your fever is going up every day, you call your doctor.**

Right now, the best way to talk to your doctor is **over the phone**. It keeps your doctor safe and also keeps space for people who are very sick.

*When should I go to the emergency room?*

**Go to the hospital immediately if you have trouble breathing.**

*Should I go to the hospital?*



*When should I end separation?*

**Continue to stay home until you are fully recovered.**

Make sure you get better first to **prevent others getting sick**.



*How do you cure COVID-19?*

**We don't have any cures or vaccines yet.**

While scientists all over the world are working very hard, **we likely won't have them for a pretty long time**. At this time, **there isn't much you can do** other than keep the person who is sick as **comfortable as possible** as they recover and do your best to practice hygienic habits to prevent the spread of the disease.

## ABOUT

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If you are looking for a more detailed guide, we recommend the peer-reviewed [“Pandemic Flu Home Care: A Detailed Guide for Caring for the Ill at Home”](#) available at Amazon (free with Kindle Unlimited subscription, US \$5.49 to buy)

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## Special Thanks

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