



## BHS Medical Department

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# Caring for Someone with COVID-19 at Home

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If you are caring for someone with COVID-19 at home, follow this advice to protect yourself and others. This information should also be followed when caring for people who have tested positive but are not showing symptoms. People at higher risk of severe illness should call their doctor as soon as symptoms start.

### Provide Support



#### **Help Cover Basic Needs:**

For most people, symptoms last a few days, and people usually feel better after a week. Help the person who is sick follow their doctor's instructions. See if over the counter medicines for fever help the person feel better. Make sure the person who is sick drinks a lot of fluids and rests. Help them with grocery shopping, filling prescriptions, and getting other items they may need. Consider having the items delivered through a delivery service, if possible.

#### **Watch For Warning Signs:**

Have their doctor's phone number on hand. Call their doctor if the person keeps getting sicker.

#### **When To Seek Emergency Medical Attention:**

If someone is showing any of these warning signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face
- Newly confused

This list is not all possible symptoms. Call your doctor for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

### Protect Yourself



#### **Limit Contact:**

The caregiver, when possible, should not be someone who is at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

#### **The Person Who Is Sick Should Isolate:**

The sick person should separate themselves from others in the home. If possible, have the person who is sick stay in their own "sick room" or area and away from others. Try to stay at least 2 meters away from the sick person. If you have to share space, make sure the room has good air flow. Improving ventilation helps remove respiratory droplets from the air. Avoid having visitors.

#### **Caregivers Should Quarantine:**

Caregivers should stay home and monitor for health for COVID-19 symptoms while caring for the person who is sick.

Caregivers should continue to stay home after care is complete.

The best way to protect yourself and others is to stay home for 14 days if you think you've been exposed to someone who has COVID-19.

**Eat in Separate Rooms Or Areas:**

The person who is sick should eat in their room.

Handle any dishes, cups/glasses, or silverware used by the person who is sick with gloves. Wash them with soap and hot water. Clean hands after taking off gloves or handling used items.

**Avoid Sharing Personal Items:**

Do not share dishes, cups/glasses, silverware, towels, bedding, or electronics like a cell phone with the person who is sick.

**When to Wear A Mask Or Gloves:**

The person who is sick should wear a mask when they are around other people at home.

**Caregiver:**

Put on a mask and ask the sick person to put on a mask before entering the room.

Wear gloves when you touch or have contact with the sick person's blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, mucus, vomit, and urine.

Throw out gloves into a lined trash can and wash your hands right away.

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Tell everyone in the home to do the same, especially after being near the person who is sick.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

**When it's safe for a person who has been sick to be around others:**

Deciding when it is safe to be around others is different for different situations.

Caregivers can leave their home 14 days after their last close contact with the person who is sick (based on the time it takes to develop illness), or 14 days after the person who is sick meets the criteria to end home isolation.



**Frequently clean and disinfect surfaces:**

If you are using a separate bedroom and bathroom: Clean the area around the person who is sick when needed, such as when the area is soiled. This will help limit your contact with the sick person. If they feel up to it, the person who is sick can clean their own space. Give the person who is sick personal cleaning and disinfection supplies.

If sharing a bathroom: The person who is sick should clean and then disinfect after each use. If this is not possible, wear a mask and wait as long as possible after the sick person has used the bathroom before coming in to clean and use the bathroom.

Wash and dry laundry:

Do not shake dirty laundry.

Wear disposable gloves while handling dirty laundry.

Use the warmest water setting you can.

Remove gloves, and wash hands right away.



**Handling trash:**

Use gloves when removing garbage bags, handling and disposing of trash.

Place all used disposable gloves, masks and other contaminated items in a lined trash can

Wash hands afterwards.

If possible, dedicate a lined trash can for the person who is sick.

Track your own health.

*Ref: CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*