

# Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

**FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW:** If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you might have it, follow the steps below to help protect other people in your home and community.

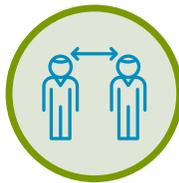
## Stay home except to get medical care

- **Stay home:** People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to recover at home. Do not leave, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- **Stay in touch with your doctor:** Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you have trouble breathing, or have any other emergency warning signs. See “When to Seek Medical Attention” on page 2.
- **Avoid public transportation:** Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.



## Separate yourself from other people in your home. This is known as home isolation

- **Stay away from others:** As much as possible, you should stay in a specific “sick room” and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.



## Call ahead before visiting your doctor

- **Call ahead:** Many medical visits for routine care are being postponed or done by phone or telemedicine.
- **If you have a medical appointment that cannot be postponed,** call your doctor’s office, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.



## Wear a facemask in the following situations, if available

- **If you are sick:** You should wear a facemask, if available, when you are around other people (including before you enter a healthcare provider’s office).
- **If you are caring for others:** If the person who is sick is not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live in the home should stay in a different room. When caregivers enter the room of the sick person, they should wear a facemask. Visitors, other than caregivers, are not recommended.



## Cover your coughs and sneezes

- **Cover:** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or direct to the inside of your elbow.
- **Dispose:** Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- **Wash hands:** See the information below.



## Clean your hands often

- **Wash hands:** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food. [Watch this 30-second video.](#)
- **Hand sanitizer:** If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- **Soap and water:** Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Avoid touching:** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



## Avoid sharing personal household items

- **Do not share:** Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.
- **Wash thoroughly after use:** After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water or put in the dishwasher.



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[HartfordHealthCare.org/Coronavirus](https://HartfordHealthCare.org/Coronavirus)

Content adapted from CDC Guidelines 3.30.20

## Clean all “high-touch” surfaces every day

Clean high-touch surfaces in your isolation area (“sick room” and bathroom) every day; let a caregiver clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces in other areas of the home.



- **Clean and disinfect:** Routinely clean high-touch surfaces in your “sick room” and bathroom. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces in common areas, but not your bedroom and bathroom.
  - If a caregiver or other person needs to clean and disinfect a sick person’s bedroom or bathroom, they should do so on an as-needed basis. The caregiver/other person should wear a mask and wait as long as possible after the sick person has used the bathroom.
- **High-touch surfaces** include phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
- **Clean and disinfect areas that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.**
- **Household cleaners and disinfectants:** Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty. Then, use a household disinfectant.
  - Be sure to follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product. Many products recommend keeping the surface wet for several minutes to ensure germs are killed. Many also recommend precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
  - Most EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.

## Monitor your symptoms

- Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever and cough. Additional symptoms, including trouble breathing and severe new onset diarrhea are more serious symptoms that indicate the need for medical attention.
- **If you are having trouble breathing, seek medical attention, but call first.**
  - Call your doctor or emergency room before going in and tell them your symptoms. They will tell you what to do.
- **Wear a facemask:** If available, put on a facemask before you enter the building. If you can’t put on a facemask, cover your coughs and sneezes. Try to stay at least 6 feet away from other people. This will help protect the people in the office or waiting room.
- **Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and local health department:** If you don’t have a primary care provider, visit Hartford HealthCare at <https://hartfordhealthcare.org/find-a-doctor> and we can connect you with one of our physicians. Your local health authorities may also give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.



## When to seek medical attention

If you develop **emergency warning signs** for COVID-19 **get medical attention immediately**. Emergency warning signs include\*:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

\*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

### Call 911 if you have a medical emergency:

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the operator that you have or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before medical help arrives.

## How to discontinue 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 CDC Guidelines.

In all cases, follow the guidance of your healthcare provider and local health department. The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with your healthcare provider and state and local health departments. Local decisions depend on local circumstances.