

# COVID-19 Exposure Toolkit

**Resources  
Provided by:**



**Spencer  
Hospital**

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[www.spencerhospital.org](http://www.spencerhospital.org)

Spencer Hospital COVID-19 Page:  
[www.spencerhospital.org/covid19](http://www.spencerhospital.org/covid19)

**Avera** 

Prepare for COVID-19:  
<https://www.avera.org/how-to-prepare-for-the-coronavirus-covid-19/>

New Normal Toolkit:  
<https://www.avera.org/app/files/public/77340/New-Normal-Patient-Toolkit.pdf>

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# COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions

## **What is social distancing?**

Social distancing means staying home as much as possible, staying at least 6 feet away from other people while in public, and avoiding gatherings with many people present. Recent studies indicate that people who are infected but do not have symptoms may also play a role in the spread of COVID-19. Everyone should wash their hands frequently, for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing. These are the best ways to protect yourself and our communities from the spread of COVID-19.

## **Should I wear a face mask?**

You could spread COVID-19 to others if you are infected with the virus even if you do not feel sick. It is recommended that everyone wear a cloth face cover when they have to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities. Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance. The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected. Do NOT use a facemask meant for a healthcare worker. Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

## **What is quarantine?**

Quarantine is used to separate people who are close contacts of someone with a contagious disease, like COVID-19, from others for a period of time to see if they become sick. This is a method to prevent the spread of disease. When someone is quarantining, they should stay home and avoid contact with other people until the quarantine period is over. This includes people in their household as much as it is possible.

## **What is isolation?**

Similar to quarantine, isolation is recommended for those who are sick with symptoms of COVID-19 and have tested positive or are waiting on the results of a test. As with quarantine, they must remain at home or the place they were told to isolate and avoid contact with other people until their isolation period is over. This includes those in their household as much as possible.

People should talk with their doctor about how long they should plan to isolate. In certain situations, some may be required to be retested before ending isolation.

## **What does it mean to be a close contact of someone with COVID-19?**

Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of someone who tested positive for COVID-19 for at least several minutes (usually about 15 minutes). Exposure risk starts 48 hours before the individual positive for COVID-19 shows symptoms. The virus is spread primarily from person to person through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs, sneezes, talks, or sings. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own eyes, mouth or nose. That is why it's important to wash your hands often and clean frequently touched surfaces daily.

Individuals exposed to COVID-19 may develop symptoms from 2-14 days after exposure.

## **Persons who have been in close contact to someone infectious with COVID-19 should quarantine until:**

- **After Day 10 from day of exposure if no symptoms have developed.**
- **After Day 7 if the exposed person tests negative and no symptoms have developed. The Specimen must be collected within 48 hours before the end of quarantine (i.e. not earlier than Day 5). The quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7.**
- **In both cases the exposed person should continue to monitor to symptoms and wear a mask when around others through Day 14.**

## **Persons who think or know they have COVID-19 and have symptoms should isolate until:**

- **At least 10 days have passed since your illness onset – AND –**
- **At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication - AND -**
- **Symptoms have improved**

## **Persons who test positive for COVID-19 and do not have symptoms should isolate until:**

- **10 days have passed since test**

*CDC discourages using the test-based strategy except as described below*

People with severe, advanced immunosuppression should isolate until:

1. Two negative tests results in a row, at least 24 hours apart - OR - 20 days post symptom onset or date of test



# Frequently Asked Questions *Continued*

## ***I am a close contact to someone who tested positive for COVID-19.***

A person who is sick with COVID-19 is most likely to spread the COVID-19 virus to others just before they have symptoms and at the beginning of their symptoms. That is why anyone who is sick should avoid contact with others and stay home unless leaving to get medical care. It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth or nose. That is why it is so important to wash your hands often. If you are a close contact to a person with COVID-19, it is recommended that you self-quarantine and stay away from other people as much as possible for 14 days from the last date of exposure to the person.

## ***I was in the same room/building as someone who tested positive COVID-19, but not in close contact with him/her.***

If you were not in close contact with someone with COVID-19, your risk of catching the virus from that person is low. Follow the general precautions, including social distancing, washing your hands often and avoid close contact with people who are sick.

## ***I was a close contact to someone who is sick but not tested for COVID-19.***

If you were around someone while they had symptoms, like fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you may have been exposed to the COVID-19 virus or another respiratory virus that causes similar symptoms, like the flu or the common cold. You should continue to practice social distancing, wash your hands often and monitor for symptoms.

If you develop any symptoms, you should isolate at home and avoid contact with other people. Call your doctor or other healthcare provider to discuss the need to be tested for COVID-19. Some people who are experiencing these symptoms may have another virus, or it could be seasonal allergies (hay fever).

## ***I have symptoms but did not get tested. How long do I need to stay isolated?***

If symptoms are mild, it may not be necessary to test. Those who can isolate at home for at least ten days after their symptoms start could consider doing that if testing was not available. It is recommended that you do isolate and avoid contact with others until:

Your respiratory symptoms (such as cough and shortness of breath) are better - AND – At least 10 days have passed since your illness onset – AND you have no fever for 24 hours and have not used fever-reducing medication during that time.

## ***I have been around someone else who was exposed to a person with COVID-19.***

To be exposed to COVID-19 you must be around the person who had it when they had symptoms or within 2 days of when their symptoms started. If you were not, you may not have been exposed to the virus.

It is recommended to watch for symptoms, avoid close contact with people who are sick, wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, and practice social distancing.

## ***I was previously COVID-19 positive and was re-exposed.***

Previously diagnosed with COVID-19 have since recovered and remain asymptomatic:

- Re-testing is **NOT** recommended within three months after the date of symptom onset (or date of test if asymptomatic persons) for the initial COVID-19 infection
- Quarantine is **NOT** recommended in the event of close contact with an infected person during the 3 month time period, as long as the previously diagnosed person remains asymptomatic (i.e., has not developed symptoms of new illness)

In persons who develop new symptoms consistent with COVID-19 during the 3 months after the date of initial symptom onset (if an alternative etiology cannot be identified by a provider) they should be clinically evaluated as appropriate and re-testing should be considered if there is not an alternative diagnosis.

- » The symptomatic person should be isolated again, if symptoms developed within 14 days after close contact with a new COVID case.



# Frequently Asked Questions *Continued*

## ***I live in the same house as someone who is under quarantine. What should I do?***

Quarantine separates people who were exposed to a contagious disease, like COVID-19, to see if they become sick and prevent spread of disease. For COVID-19, the quarantine period is 10 days after the person's last exposure to someone with COVID-19. If you are in a house that also has a quarantined individual, that person should try as much as possible to keep their distance from the others in the house. This can understandably be a great challenge, especially when the quarantined individual is a child or a parent caring for a child.

Try to keep the person in their own room, if possible and use a separate bathroom, if available. Before going into shared areas, the person quarantining should wash their hands, try to maintain at least 6 feet of distance between themselves and others, and cover any coughs or sneezes. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily and do not share personal household items like dishes, glasses, utensils or towels. Others in the house should also maintain good hand washing habits. The quarantined individual should immediately isolate if they become sick and contact his/her healthcare provider.

## ***I am caring for someone who is sick with symptoms of COVID-19. What should I do?***

If the person is well enough to not need close care, they should stay in one room, away from other people. If possible, have them use a separate bathroom. Avoid sharing personal household items, like dishes, towels and bedding. If the sick person needs to be around others, they should wear a mask, if available. If the sick person can't wear a mask, you should wear one while in the same room, if available. Always wash your hands while caring for them, as well as frequently throughout the day. Frequently, at least every day, clean all surfaces that are touched often. Avoid having any unnecessary visitors. Monitor the person for worsening symptoms and if the person is getting sicker, call their healthcare provider. For medical emergencies, call 911 and make sure to notify them that the person has COVID-19.

## ***Can people who recover from COVID-19 be re-infected with SARS-CoV-2?***

The short answer is "maybe." There simply isn't enough health data at this time to determine if a person who has been infected will be immune from reinfection; or if they do have some immunity, how long it will protect them.

## ***If an infected person has clinically recovered and then later is identified as a contact of a new case, do they need to be quarantined?***

Yes, they should follow quarantine recommendations for contacts. We do not know to what degree or duration persons are protected against re-infection.

## ***Should I get an antibody test to determine if I had the virus?***

An antibody is a protein your body makes in response to a virus or bacteria. An antibody or serology test will measure for the amount or presence of antibodies in your blood that your body made in response to a COVID-19 infection. If you have had a diagnosed case of COVID-19, a serology test will indicate that you had an immune response, provides information to public health, and may make you eligible for plasma donation.

At this time, if you have not had a diagnosed case of COVID-19, antibody or serology testing offers little value. Currently, these tests have a limited ability to indicate that you have ever had a COVID-19 infection, even if you may have had symptoms that are consistent with COVID-19. Additionally, serology tests are unable to identify if you would be immune to COVID-19. Even if you had a positive serology test, recommendations for masking and social distancing still apply, as you could still get sick or spread virus to others.

## ***What if I have travel plans?***

Travel can increase your chance of spreading and getting COVID-19. Postponing travel and staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.

If you do decide to travel, consider getting tested via PCR or antigen test 1-3 days before your trip. Also consider getting tested 3-5 days after your trip and reduce non-essential activities for a full 7 days after travel, even if your test is negative. If you don't get tested, consider reducing non essential activities for 10 days after travel.

For full guidance about travel and COVID-19, visit [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/travel-during-covid19.html).



# Quarantine & Isolation After Exposure

For questions, please call Clay County Public Health at 712-264-6380

## Quarantine

If you feel healthy but recently had **\*close contact** with a person with COVID-19

*\*Close contact defined as being less than 6 feet away from someone for more than 15 minutes*

### Stay home and Monitor Your Health

- » Stay home until 10 days after your last exposure.
- » Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms of COVID-19.
- » If you become ill, call your healthcare provider right away.
- » If possible, stay away from people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.
- » If you are in a “critical infrastructure worker”, you MAY be able to return to work during your quarantine as long as you remain symptom free. You MUST wear a mask, monitor yourself for symptoms, and distance yourself from others at work. This is ultimately up to your employer.

**Going to work would be the ONLY exception to your 10 day quarantine at home.**

### Consider Getting Tested

- » Even if you have no symptoms, you may carry the virus that causes COVID-19 and pass it to others.
- » Wait at least 48 hours after your earliest exposure to the COVID-19 infected person.
- » **Regardless of your test result, you have been exposed and still need to remain quarantined for 10 days.**

**A NEGATIVE TEST RESULT DOES NOT NEGATE THE NEED TO QUARANTINE.**

## Isolation

- » If you think or know you have COVID-19 and have symptoms, you should isolate until:
  - 1. At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared - AND -**
  - 2. At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication - AND -**
  - 3. Symptoms have improved**
- » If you test positive for COVID-19 and do not have symptoms, you should isolate until:
  - **10 days have passed since test**
- » People with severe, advanced immunosuppression should isolate until:
  - 1. Two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart - OR -**
  - 2. 20 days post symptom onset or date of test**
- » If you live with others, stay in a specific “sick room” or area and away from other people or animals, including pets. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- » If you have symptoms of COVID-19, without a known exposure, and your test is NEGATIVE, you may go back to daily activities 24 hours after your fever and other symptoms resolve.





# How to Manage COVID-19 Symptoms at Home

Currently, there are no verified treatments for COVID-19. However, COVID-19 is similar to other viruses you might get during cold and flu season, and most people can recover at home without needing medical attention. Current treatment recommendations are to manage individual symptoms.

## Common symptoms can include:

- **Fever or chills**
- **Cough**
- **Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing**
- **Fatigue, Muscle or body aches**
- **Headache**
- **New loss of taste or smell**
- **Sore throat**
- **Congestion or runny nose**
- **Nausea or vomiting**
- **Diarrhea**

## Managing fever

Use over-the-counter medications, such as Ibuprofen or Tylenol, to manage a fever or pain.

## Managing cough and shortness of breath

Over-the-counter medications used for upper respiratory infections may help alleviate symptoms.

Those medications include guaifenesin (Mucinex), pseudoephedrine (Sudafed) and dextromethorphan (Robitussin, Delsym).

Some medications include multiple drugs; contact your physician if you plan to take more than one medication to manage your symptoms.

## Other treatments that may help include:

- **Using a humidifier**
- **Using a nasal rinse**
- **Using a chest rub, such as Vicks VapoRub**
- **Taking a hot shower**
- **Propping yourself up with pillows**
- **Practice slow, deep breathing in through the nose, out through the mouth**

## Maintaining healthy habits

Be sure to stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids. In general, you should drink 8-12 8oz. glasses of fluid each day. If you are experiencing stomach upset, you should drink even more by continuously sipping smaller amounts of salt containing fluids such as sports drinks. Get plenty of rest, and wash your hands frequently. Incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables into your diet.

- **Spinach and nuts are rich in vitamin E.**
- **Citrus fruits, cantaloupe, watermelon and berries are rich in vitamin C.**

Incorporate exercises as you're able.

Eliminate stressors as best you can; keep connected to your friends and family through phone calls or other technology.

## Call your physician or the emergency department

**Please call your physician or the Spencer Hospital Emergency Department at 712-264-6100 if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:**

- **Respiratory distress:** Monitor your breathing by asking yourself, "How is my breathing? Do I feel comfortable?" If you cannot talk in full sentences, you need to see your physician.
- **Gastrointestinal distress:** If you cannot keep fluids or food in your system due to vomiting or diarrhea.
- **Fever or 100.4 or higher that is not responding to acetaminophen (Tylenol).**



# How to Protect Yourself and Others

Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

## Know How It Spreads

- There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).
- **The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus.**
- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person.
  - » Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
  - » Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes or talks.
  - » These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
  - » Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

## Everyone Should

### Wash your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, **use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol**. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth** with unwashed hands.

### Avoid close contact

- **Avoid close contact with people who are sick, even inside your home.** If possible, maintain 6 feet between the person who is sick and other household members.
- Put distance between yourself and other people outside of your home.
  - » Remember that some people without symptoms may be able to spread virus.
  - » Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) from other people.
  - » Do not gather in groups.
  - » Stay out of crowded places and avoid mass gatherings.
  - » Keeping distance from others is especially important for people who are at higher risk of getting very sick.

### Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others

- You could spread COVID-19 to others even if you do not feel sick.
- Everyone should wear a cloth face cover when they have

to go out in public, for example to the grocery store or to pick up other necessities.

- » Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.
- The cloth face cover is meant to protect other people in case you are infected.
- Do NOT use a facemask meant for a health care worker.
- Continue to keep about 6 feet between yourself and others. The cloth face cover is not a substitute for social distancing.

### Cover coughs and sneezes

- **If you are in a private setting and do not have on your cloth face covering, remember to always cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.
- Throw used tissues in the trash.
- Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not readily available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

### Clean and disinfect

- Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks.
- If surfaces are dirty, clean them. Use detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.
- Then, use a household disinfectant. Most common EPA-registered household disinfectants will work.



# Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home When Someone is Sick

## How to clean and disinfect

### Clean

- Wear reusable/disposable gloves for cleaning & disinfection.
- Clean surfaces using soap and water, then use disinfectant.
- Practice routine cleaning of frequently touched surfaces. High-touch surfaces include:
  - » Tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, etc.

### Disinfect

- Recommend use of EPA-registered household disinfectant. Follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product.
- **Many products recommend:**
  - » Keeping surface wet for a period of time
  - » Precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
- **Diluted household bleach solutions may also be used** if appropriate for the surface.
  - » Check the label to see if your bleach is intended for disinfection, and ensure the product is not past its expiration date. Some bleaches, such as those designed for safe use on colored clothing or for whitening may not be suitable for disinfection.
  - » Unexpired household bleach will be effective against coronaviruses when properly diluted. Follow manufacturer's instructions for application and proper ventilation. Never mix household bleach with ammonia or any other cleanser. Leave solution on the surface for at least 1 minute.
  - » To make a bleach solution, mix:
    - 5 tablespoons (1/3 cup) bleach per gallon of water
    - OR 4 teaspoons bleach per quart of water
- Bleach solutions need to be remixed every 24 hours.
- **Alcohol solutions with at least 70% alcohol may also be used.**

### Soft Surfaces

For soft surfaces such as carpeted floor, rugs and drapes:

- Clean the surface using soap and water or with cleaners appropriate for use on these surfaces.
- Launder items (if possible) according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely. OR
- Disinfect with an EPA-registered household disinfectant.
- Vacuum as usual.

### Electronics

For electronics, such as tablets, touch screens, keyboards, and remote controls:

- Consider putting a **wipeable cover** on electronics.
- Follow **manufacturer's instruction** for disinfecting.
  - » If no guidance, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol. Dry surface thoroughly.

### Laundry

For clothing, towels, linens and other items:

- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.
- **Wear disposable gloves** when handling dirty laundry from a person who is sick.
- Dirty laundry from a person who is sick can be washed with other people's items.
- **Do not shake** dirty laundry.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces.
- Remove gloves, and wash hands right away.

### Clean Hands Often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
  - » Always wash immediately after removing gloves and after contact with a person who is sick.
- Hand sanitizers: If soap and water are not readily available and hands are not visibly dirty, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. However, if hands are visibly dirty, always wash hands with soap and water.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth

## When someone is sick

### Bedroom and Bathroom

Keep separate bedroom and bathroom for a person who is sick (if possible).

- The person who is sick should stay separated from other people in the home (as much as possible).
- If you have a separate bedroom and bathroom: Wear disposable gloves and only clean the area such as when the area is soiled. This will help limit your contact with the person who is sick.
  - » Caregivers can provide personal cleaning supplies to the person who is sick (if appropriate). Supplies include tissues, paper towels, cleaners and EPA-registered disinfectants. If they feel up to it, the person who is sick can clean their own space.
- If shared bathroom: The person who is sick should clean and disinfect after each use. If this is not possible, the caregiver should wait as long as possible before cleaning and disinfecting.
- The CDC has additional precautions for household members and caregivers if someone is sick.

### Food

- Stay separated: The person who is sick should eat (or be fed) in their room, if possible.
- Wash dishes and utensils using disposable gloves and hot water: Handle any used dishes, cups/glasses, or silverware with gloves. Wash them with soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.
- Clean hands after taking off gloves or handling used items.

### Trash

- Dedicated, lined trash can: If possible, dedicate a lined trash can for the person who is sick. Use disposable gloves when removing garbage bags, and handling and disposing of trash. Wash hands afterwards.



# Slow the Spread of COVID-19

## WATCH FOR SYMPTOMS

Symptoms may appear within 2-14 days of exposure to the virus.  
In the last 14 days, have you noticed these symptoms?



Shortness of breath



Fever over 100 °F



Cough



Muscle pain



Loss of taste or smell



Vomiting or diarrhea



Chills



Sore throat

## CALL BEFORE YOU VISIT.

Call your clinic or our local COVID-19 Call Center 712-264-6514

Get guidance on symptoms



People only tested if screened first

## ISOLATE YOURSELF.

Wait for results | Don't share items | Don't share bathroom or bedroom areas



# General Principles for Talking to Your Children about COVID-19

Source: CDC & Avera.org

## Remain calm and reassuring

Remember that children will react to both what you say and how you say it. They will pick up cues from the conversations you have with them and with others.

## Make yourself available to listen and to talk

Make time to talk. Be sure children know they can come to you when they have questions.

## Avoid language that might blame others and lead to stigma

Remember that viruses can make anyone sick, regardless of a person's race or ethnicity. Avoid making assumptions about who might have COVID-19.

## Pay attention to what children see or hear on television, radio, or online

Consider reducing the amount of screen time focused on COVID-19. Too much information on one topic can lead to anxiety.

## Provide information that is honest and accurate

- Give children information that is truthful and appropriate for the age and development level of the child.
- Talk to children about how some stories on COVID-19 on the Internet and social media may be based on rumors and inaccurate information.

## Teach children everyday actions to reduce the spread of germs

- Remind children to stay away from people who are coughing or sneezing or sick.
- Remind them to cough or sneeze into a tissue or their elbow, then throw the tissue into the trash.
- Discuss any new actions that may be taken at school to help protect children and school staff (e.g., increased handwashing, cancellation of events or activities).
- Get children into a handwashing habit.
  - » Teach them to wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing their nose, coughing or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
  - » If soap and water are not available, teach them to use hand sanitizer. Hand sanitizer should contain at least 60% alcohol. Supervise young children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent swallowing alcohol, especially in schools and child care facilities.

