



## COVID-19 Care Instructions

If you suspect you have or have been diagnosed with the COVID-19 virus, follow these steps to protect others and yourself.

See page 5 for How to Wash Your Hands.

### 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 go to work, school or public areas.
- **Stay in touch with your doctor.** Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you feel worse or if you think it is an emergency.
- **Avoid public transportation.** Avoid all public transportation, ridesharing or taxis.

### Separate yourself from other people in your home *(this is known as home isolation)*

- **Stay away from others.** As much as possible, stay in a specific “sick room” and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- **Limit contact with animals.** Restrict contact with pets and other animals. While there are no reports of animals becoming sick, it is recommended to limit contact with them until more information is known. When possible, have someone else care for your animals while you are sick with COVID-19. If you must care for them, wash your hands before and after you interact with them.

### Call ahead before visiting your doctor

- **Call ahead.** If you have a medical appointment, call your doctor’s office, and tell them you have COVID-19 before showing up.

### Wear a facemask if you are sick

- **If you are sick** – You should wear a facemask when you are around other people including in 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 mask, if available. 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.
- **Dispose.** Throw away used tissues in a lined trash can.
- **Wash hands.** Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



## 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, sneezing, going to the bathroom, before eating, or preparing food.
- **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 your face.** 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 wash in the dishwasher.

## Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday

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

- **Clean and disinfect.** Routinely clean high-touch surfaces. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces outside of your sick room and bathroom. If a caregiver needs to clean the sick room or bathroom, they should do so on an as needed basis. The caregiver should wear a mask and wait as long as possible after the sick person was in the bathroom.
- **High touch surfaces.** This 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 products also recommend precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation. Most EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective.

## Monitor your symptoms

- **Seek medical attention, but call first.** Seek medical care right away if your illness is worsening (for example, if you have difficulty breathing).
- **Call your doctor before going to their office.** Before going to the doctor’s office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them your symptoms. They will tell you what to do.
- **Wear a facemask.** If possible, put on a facemask before you enter the building. If you don’t have a facemask, keep at least 6 feet away from others. This will help protect the people in the office or waiting room.



## Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and local health department:

Your local health authorities will give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.

If you develop emergency warning signs for worsening illness, 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 (wake up)
- Fever
- Bluish lips or face

This is not all inclusive. Please call your doctor for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning. **Call 911 if you have a medical emergency. Tell the operator you have COVID-19.** If possible, put on a facemask before medical help arrives.

## How to discontinue home isolation

People with COVID-19 can stop home isolation when all three of the following have occurred

- You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (three full days of no fever without the use of medicine to reduce fever):

**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 started

In all cases, follow the advice of your doctor and local health department. The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with your doctor and local health department. Local decisions depend on local circumstances. The most recent recommendations for stopping home isolation can be found on the CDC website at:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html#when>

## Information for Caregivers of Patients with COVID-19

- Stay in a separate room from the COVID-19 patient and follow caregiver instructions listed above.

- Monitor for symptoms in yourself and self-isolate (stay home) as much as possible: **Keep yourself on home isolation for 14 days as much as possible.**

Do not go to school, work, or public places. Try to arrange to have essential items delivered to the home. If you must leave the home to obtain essential items (for example, groceries, medicines), wear a facemask and keep at least 6 feet away from other people.

- Washing your hands is important to prevent getting the virus. See page 5 instructions for how to wash your hands.



- **Monitor for symptoms.** Watch for fever, cough and shortness of breath in yourself. If you develop symptoms or are concerned you have the COVID-19 virus, separate yourself from other people in the house and call your doctor's office. Let them know you are taking care of someone who may have the COVID-19 virus.

### **For more information about the COVID-19 virus:**

- Centers for Disease Control is available at [cdc.gov/COVID19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID19) for all topics
- Centers for Disease Control, Steps to Help Prevent the Spread of COVID-19 if you are sick:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/sick-with-2019-nCoV-fact-sheet.pdf>
- Alabama Department of Public Health:  
<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/index.html>
- Mobile County Health Department:  
<http://www.mchd.org/>
- Baldwin County Health Department:  
<http://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/baldwin/>

### **When and how to Wash your Hands**

**See instructions below and watch this short video to learn how to wash your hands to stay healthy:**

<https://youtu.be/cViNneQbPyA>

### **Wash Your Hands Often to Stay Healthy**

You can help yourself and your loved ones stay healthy by washing your hands often, especially during these key times when you are likely to get and spread germs:

- **Before, during, and after preparing** food
- **Before and after** eating food
- **Before and after** caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- **Before and after** treating a cut or wound
- **After** using the toilet
- **After** changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- **After** blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- **After** touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- **After** handling pet food or pet treats
- **After** touching garbage



## Follow Six Steps to Wash Your Hands the Right Way

Washing your hands is easy, and it's one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of germs. Clean hands can stop germs from spreading from one person to another and throughout an entire community—from your home and workplace to childcare facilities and hospitals.

Follow these six steps every time.

1. **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
2. **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
3. **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the “Happy Birthday” song from beginning to end twice.
4. **Rinse** your hands well under clean, running water.
5. **Dry** your hands using a clean towel or air dry them.
6. **Turn off faucet with a clean paper towel**  
*(Reason: If you turn the faucet off with your clean hand; the faucet will contaminate your hand again.)*

Washing hands with soap and water is the best way to get rid of germs in most situations. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. You can tell if the sanitizer contains at least 60% alcohol by looking at the product label.

## **Sanitizers can quickly reduce the number of germs on hands in many situations. However,**

- Sanitizers do **not** get rid of all types of germs.
- Hand sanitizers may not be as effective when hands are visibly dirty or greasy.
- Hand sanitizers might not remove harmful chemicals from hands like pesticides and heavy metals



**1 Wet**

**2 Get Soap**

**3 Scrub**

**4 Rinse**

**5 Dry**

**WASH YOUR HANDS!**

Hands that look clean can still have icky germs!

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
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