



# Known COVID-19 Infection: Guidelines for You and Others in Your Home After Hospital Discharge

## Patient Education

These guidelines are for patients **who have been diagnosed with COVID-19 infection and are being discharged from the hospital**. Please follow these guidelines to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### What should you do after being discharged from the hospital with COVID-19?

#### Begin home isolation

- Follow the 20+1 guidelines below.
- Stay at home unless you need to seek care that is medically necessary.
- Do not leave your home, even to go to work, school or the grocery store. Ask someone to help you buy food or other essentials, or arrange for a delivery service.
- If you must leave your home, wear a mask and avoid using public transportation, ride shares and taxis, if possible.

#### 20+1 Guidelines for Home Isolation

You have been discharged from the hospital with COVID-19 infection. It's important for you to stay at home until you meet the following 20+1 conditions:

- Self-isolate for at least 20 days since your symptoms first appeared, and at least 1 day after recovery. Recovery is defined as being fever-free without using fever-reducing medicines (e.g., acetaminophen) and improvement in symptoms.
- Regardless of when you were discharged from the hospital, the 20-day window of home isolation starts when your symptoms first appear.

#### Track your symptoms

You can enroll in the Pandemic Response Network: Duke Community Health Watch. This program helps you keep track of your symptoms and provides guidance if your symptoms get worse. It also includes telephone follow-up to make sure you get the care you need. This means, someone will call to check on you. For more information, visit [CovidWatch.DukeHealth.org](https://CovidWatch.DukeHealth.org). Use your smart device to scan the QR code to learn more.



If you are a Duke employee with COVID-19 symptoms or with a known or suspected exposure to COVID-19, participation in this study DOES NOT replace the required symptom monitoring with Duke Employee Occupational Health and Wellness. (See page 6 for more information).

## Consider donating plasma

When you recover from an infection like COVID-19, your immune system makes antibodies to recognize and fight the same infection in the future. These antibodies are stored in your plasma. If you donate plasma, scientists can use the antibodies in your plasma to help people who currently have COVID-19 infections. To donate plasma, you must be 28 days out from your last sign or symptom of COVID-19. You must show your COVID-19 test results from your doctor and meet all other blood donation criteria. For more information, contact [covidplasma@duke.edu](mailto:covidplasma@duke.edu).

## What do members of your household need to know after you are discharged home from the hospital?

- If members of your household plan to stay at home with you, they should follow 14-day self-monitoring period.
- If members of your household choose to stay outside of the home after you are discharged from the hospital, they should stay away until you meet the 20+1 Guidelines for Home Isolation.

### 14-Day Self-Monitoring Period

If you live with others, those members of your household should not leave the home for 14 days. This 14-day period begins on the last day that they had close contact with a COVID-19 positive person.

Each person in the household should do the following during the 14-day self-monitoring period:

- Take their temperature at least once a day, preferably between 4 pm and 8 pm.
- Record their temperature and symptoms daily.
- If they should develop symptoms during the 14-Day Self-Monitoring Period, they should stay at home and begin the 10+1 Guidelines for Home Isolation. They can stop home isolation when they complete the 10+1 Guidelines for Home Isolation.



## Should anyone in your home get tested for COVID-19?

If you have mild symptoms, check with your doctor to see if they recommend testing. You do not need to be tested for COVID-19 if you are well enough to stay home. However, your doctor may recommend testing based on your health condition(s).

## When should you seek medical attention for yourself or someone in your household?

If your symptoms worsen, seek prompt medical attention. Examples of symptoms worsening include difficulty breathing, chest pain, fainting, confusion, trouble eating or drinking, increasing weakness or any symptoms that concern you.



If it is not an emergency, call your provider and inform them that you or a member of your household have COVID-19 symptoms. Schedule an online medical visit with Duke Health Anywhere at [DukeHealth.org/anywhere](https://DukeHealth.org/anywhere). Your virtual visit is secure. For follow-up visits after being discharged, ask your provider for a virtual visit. If this is not possible, reschedule the visit for a later date.



If it is an emergency and you need to call an ambulance, dial 911. Inform the operator that you or a member of your household have COVID-19 symptoms.



Put on a face mask when leaving the house to prevent the spread of infection. If you do not have a face mask, request one upon arrival.

## Who in your household may be in a high-risk group for having serious illness from COVID-19?

### Increased risk for severe illness

People of any age with the following conditions **are at increased risk of severe illness** from COVID-19:

- Cancer
- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

## Might be at increased risk for severe illness

COVID-19 is a new disease. Currently there are limited data and information about the impact of underlying medical conditions and whether they increase the risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Based on what we know at this time, people with the following conditions **might be at an increased risk for severe illness** from COVID-19:

- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
- Liver disease
- Pregnancy
- Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
- Smoking
- Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus

## What can you and your household members do to prevent the spread of COVID-19?



### Wash your hands

- Wash your hands frequently for at least 20 seconds. Use soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer (greater than 60% alcohol).
- When using hand sanitizer, rub your hands together until they are fully dry. Do not wipe off excess hand sanitizer.
- Use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.



### Cover your nose and mouth with a mask when around others

- When you talk, sneeze, or cough, respiratory droplets leave your mouth.
- These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are near you.
- Wearing even a cloth mask helps prevent these droplets from spreading to others.



### Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cough or sneeze into a tissue. If you do not have a tissue, sneeze into the crook of your elbow, not into your hand. Dispose of tissues into a disposable trash bag. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If you have a caregiver, they should use disposable tissues to wipe away any mucus or phlegm after you have sneezed or coughed. Your caregiver should dispose of tissues into a disposable trash bag and immediately wash their hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer.



### Throw away trash

- Use a separate lined trash can for the person showing symptoms.
- Use gloves to dispose of trash.



## Clean high-touch surfaces

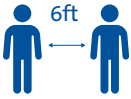
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that are frequently touched using your usual household cleaning products. Detergents and bleach will be effective at getting rid of the virus on surfaces. Use cleaning products according to label instructions.
- Clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool or bodily fluids on them.
- Remember to clean surfaces such as tables, doorknobs, countertops, toilets, light switches, handles, remote controls, desks, phones, keyboards, tablets, handrails, faucets and sinks.
- Use a dishwasher to clean and dry your used dishes and cutlery, if available. If this is not possible, wash your items using liquid soap and warm water. Dry your items using a clean towel separate from other household members



## Do Laundry

Dirty laundry from a person with symptoms can be washed with other people's items. For clothing, towels, linens and other items:

- Put on a pair of disposable gloves.
- Do not shake dirty laundry.
- Place laundry into washing machine.
- Clean and disinfect clothes hampers according to guidance above for surfaces.
- Remove your gloves and wash your hands with soap and water before touching washing machine.
- Launder items according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Use the warmest appropriate water setting and dry items completely.



## Keep your distance from others

- Aim to keep 6 feet (3 steps) away from others.
- Limit the amount of time you spend in shared spaces, such as kitchens, bathrooms and sitting areas. Keep shared spaces well ventilated.
- Sleep separately from others. This is particularly important if you use a device such as CPAP or BiPAP for sleep apnea.
- Use a separate bathroom and towels from the rest of the household, if possible.
- Avoid using the kitchen while others are present. Eat your meals in a separate room, if possible.



## Avoid visitors in your home

- Do not invite or allow visitors, such as friends and family, to enter your home. If you want to speak to someone, use the phone or social media.
- If you or a family member receive essential care in your home, caregivers should continue to visit. Caregivers should wear face masks and gloves to reduce the risk of getting COVID-19.



## Maintain well-being at home

- Staying at home for an extended time can be difficult, frustrating and lonely.
- It is important to take care of your mind as well as your body and to get the support you need. Stay in touch with family and friends over the phone or through social media.
- Consider activities such as cooking, reading, online learning and watching films. If you feel well enough, you can take part in light exercise inside your home.
- Many people find it helpful to remind themselves why self-isolation is important. Most people infected with COVID-19 only experience flu-like symptoms. But some people are badly affected by COVID-19, particularly the elderly and those with certain medical conditions. By staying home, you are protecting the lives of others.

# How should you manage special situations?

## Duke employees

- If you are a Duke employee with any COVID-19 symptoms or with a known or suspected exposure to COVID-19, contact the Duke Health COVID-19 hotline at 919-385-0429. Choose option 1, between 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.
- For urgent concerns after business hours, call the Employee Health Blood and Body Fluid Hotline at 919-684-8115. You will be emailed an intake form to complete. Complete the intake form that Employee Health sends to you in an email. Submit the completed form. Duke Employee Occupational Health and Wellness (EOHW) will contact you after reviewing the form.
- Employees with known or suspected exposure to COVID-19 are required to complete the EOHW symptom monitoring program.
- Duke employees participating in the COVID-19 symptom monitoring study ARE still expected to complete the required symptom monitoring and follow-up with EOHW.

## Women breastfeeding while infected

- There is currently no evidence to suggest the virus is spread through breast milk.
- COVID-19 infection is spread by respiratory droplets and touching contaminated surfaces.
- Current evidence shows children with COVID-19 experience less severe symptoms than adults. The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh any potential risks of transmission of the virus through breast milk or by being in close contact. This is an individual decision that you can discuss with your provider.
- If you or a family member are feeding with formula or expressed milk, sterilize the equipment carefully before each use. Do not share bottles or a breast pump with someone else.

## Children living in the household

- So far, it appears that children with COVID-19 are less severely affected. It is still important to keep your child at home as outlined in the Home Isolation or Self-Monitoring Guidelines. Children should follow the same general recommendations for good hand hygiene.

## Pets

- At present, there is limited evidence that companion animals or pets such as dogs and cats can be infected with COVID-19.

## Resources

- CDC: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html)
- NC DHHS: <https://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/public-health/covid19>
- Duke Health: [www.dukehealth.org/covid-19-update](http://www.dukehealth.org/covid-19-update)
- North Carolina COVID-19 Hotline: 866-462-3821 (open 24 hours, seven days a week)
- For non-emergency COVID-19 questions: Call 211 or text “COVIDNC” to 898211
- Duke Health COVID-19 Hotline: 919-385-0429
- Duke employee website: [keepworking.duke.edu/faqs/staffing](http://keepworking.duke.edu/faqs/staffing)