

COVID-19: How to self-isolate

You must isolate yourself from others if:

- You have COVID-19, OR
- You have COVID-19 symptoms, OR
- You may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 or someone who has symptoms of COVID-19, OR
- You have returned from anywhere outside Canada, including the United States, within the past 14 days.

COVID-19 symptoms can include: fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and difficulty swallowing. For more information on symptoms see the [Ministry of Health COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms](#).

Follow these instructions when isolating:

Stay home

- Do not go outside, unless on to a private balcony or private enclosed yard where you can avoid close contact with others.
- Do not use public transportation, taxis or ride-shares.
- Shop online or have a friend or family member pick up supplies for you.

Avoid contact with others

- Do not have visitors unless essential (e.g. care providers).
- Stay away from seniors and people with chronic medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, lung problems, immune deficiency).
- As much as possible, stay in a separate room from other people in your home and use a separate bathroom if you have one.
- If you have to be in contact with others, practise physical distancing and keep at least two metres/six feet between yourself and other people.
- Make sure that shared rooms have good airflow (e.g. open windows).

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw used tissues in a wastebasket lined with a plastic bag, and clean your hands.
- Clean your hands after emptying the wastebasket.
- If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hand.

Clean your hands

- Clean your hands often with soap and water and lather for at least 15 seconds.
- Dry your hands with a paper towel, or with your own cloth towel that no one else shares.

- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer if your hands are not visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unclean hands.

Wear a mask over your nose and mouth

- Wear a mask if you must leave your house to see a health care provider.
- Wear a mask if you are within two metres/six feet of other people, or stay in a separate room.
- Ensure your mask completely covers your nose and mouth and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- If a medical mask is not available, a non-medical mask or facial covering (e.g. homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana, or scarf) can be worn.
- If you do not have a mask, maintain at least two metres/six feet from people and cover your cough/sneeze.
- If you cannot wear a mask, people should wear a mask when they are in the same room as you.

Clean your home

- Clean your home with regular household cleaners.
- Clean frequently touched items such as toilets, sink tap handles, doorknobs and bedside tables on a daily basis.

Avoid sharing household items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with others.
- After use, these items should be washed with soap or detergent in warm water. No special soap is needed.
- Dishwasher and washing machines can be used.
- Do not share cigarettes.

Monitor your symptoms

- If you develop symptoms or your symptoms are worsening, and you are concerned, contact Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 or your health care provider.
- If you need urgent medical attention, contact 911.

Travel to and from the hospital or health care provider's office

- Do not use public transportation.
- Drive yourself if possible.
- If driving yourself is not possible, arrange a ride with a family member, friend, taxi, or ride share. Sit in the back seat, open the window, and wear a mask.
- If you take a taxi/ride share, record company name and operator number.

Testing

- There is a test for COVID-19. The test tells you if you have the infection right now. The test involves taking a swab from the back of the nose or throat.

- You should get tested for COVID-19 if:
 - You have one or more symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild.
- Some asymptomatic individuals may be recommended for testing in consultation with public health. This includes if:
 - You were a close contact of someone who has COVID-19;
 - You are concerned you may have been exposed to someone who might have COVID-19, even if you do not have symptoms;
 - You are at high risk for getting COVID-19 through your work (e.g. health care workers, grocery store or food processing plant employees), even if you do not have symptoms.
- To get tested, [find an assessment centre in Toronto](#).
- If you were tested for COVID-19 please visit [COVID-19.ontario.ca](https://www.covid-19.ontario.ca) and click on "check your lab results."
 - Results can take up to four days.
 - Toronto residents who have issues accessing results, or who do not have internet access, may contact Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.
 - Individuals without a health card must follow up with the assessment centre or testing physician directly for lab results.

Inform your contacts if you have symptoms of COVID-19

- Please inform anyone who lives in your household and anyone else you had close contact with to isolate for 14 days from the last day they had contact with you.
- This applies to anyone you had close contact with up to 48 hours before you were sick and while you were sick.

When to end self-isolation

- If you had symptoms:
 - Isolate for 14 days beginning when your symptoms started.
 - After 14 days, you can stop isolating if you no longer have a fever and your symptoms have improved, but you should continue with physical distancing measures. If you are still unwell at 14 days, contact Telehealth or your health care provider.
- If you did not have COVID-19 symptoms but were tested:
 - Follow the advice of public health.
- If you had contact with someone with COVID-19 or COVID-19 symptoms:
 - Isolate for 14 days after your last contact with that person.
- If you are a health care worker:
 - Follow up with your Occupational Health and Safety Department before returning to work.

More information

For more information, visit our website at www.toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.