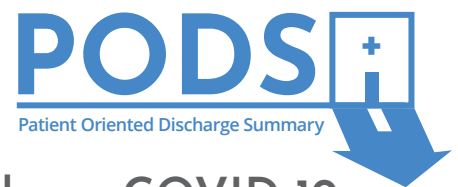


Your Guide to Managing COVID-19 at Home



For patients going home from hospital who have COVID-19 or are waiting for COVID-19 test results.

Read this brochure to learn more about:

- What to do before you leave the hospital
- What to do when you get home
- How to manage your symptoms
- Where to go for more information



Before you leave the hospital

1. Review the information in this package. Talk to your health care team if you have questions about this information.
2. Arrange for 1 family member or friend to drive you home.
 - Do not take public transportation such as the bus, streetcar or subway.
 - Take a taxi or car service if you cannot arrange a ride. Ask your nurse for help. You will need to pay for the ride.
3. Ask your health care team whether medications can be delivered to the unit, or arrange with your local pharmacy to have your medications delivered to your home.
 - Do not go to the pharmacy to pick up your medications.
 - Call your local pharmacy, to make arrangements to get your medicine. Be ready with the following information:
 - Your address and phone number
 - Your health card number
 - Your drug insurance plan information
 - Your credit card information, if available
 - Let your health care team know if you need help contacting your pharmacy.

How do I wear a face mask?

[Click here for more tips on how best to wear and remove a face mask.](#)

Going home

When you leave the hospital:

- Wear 1 mask out of the hospital. Do not remove the mask until you are inside your home. Follow the instructions on how to take off a mask below.

In the car:

- Keep your mask on, making sure it covers your nose and mouth at all times. Do not touch your face or mask.
- Sit in the back seat.
- Open the car windows.
- If you take a taxi or car service, write down the taxi or car service company and the license plate of the car. Public Health may ask you for this information.
- The person driving you does not need to wear a mask unless they have symptoms.

Taxi or car service company: _____

License plate: _____



Once you get home:

The most important thing to do is to **self-isolate**.

- Stay at home and **avoid contact with others**.
- **Do not leave your home** unless it is to see a health care provider.

Self-isolating stops the spread of germs and prevents others from getting sick. Refer to the "**How to self-isolate**" fact sheet for detailed instructions on how to self-isolate and prevent infection through handwashing and keeping things clean.

You can stop self-isolating when:

- It has been 14 days or more since your symptoms started
AND
- Your symptoms are better and you do not have a fever

**If your symptoms are not better after 14 days, continue to self-isolate.
Contact your primary care provider or call Telehealth Ontario (available 24
hours a day) at 1 866 797 0000.**

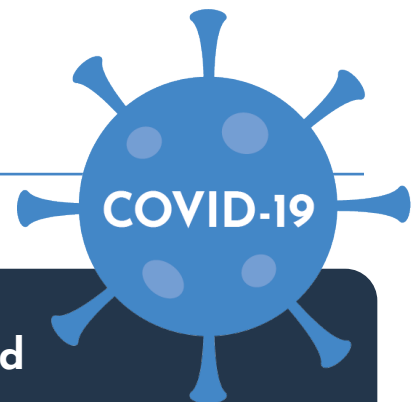
Frequent Questions

I live with other people. What do they need to do?

The people you live with need to prepare your home to avoid spreading the virus. Before you get home they need to:

- Make sure there is soap at home.
- Get face masks or scarves to cover the nose and mouth and wear them when they are close to you.
- Set up a separate bedroom and bathroom for you if possible.

Your health care team will give you the **"Self-isolation: Guide for caregivers, household members, and close contacts"** handout which explains what members of your house need to do when you get home.



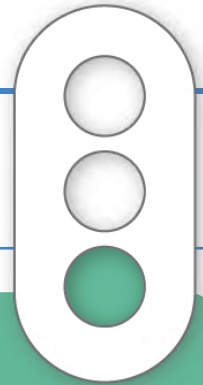
How can I manage feeling nervous and worried about COVID-19?

It is normal to feel nervous and worried about COVID-19. Knowing this and paying attention to your mental health is important.

Stress during an infectious disease outbreak can include:

- fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones
- changes in sleeping or eating patterns
- difficulty sleeping or concentrating
- worsening of chronic health problems
- increased use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs

Take care of yourself, your friends and your family to help cope with stress. There are services available to help. Contact 211 Ontario using the information below if you need information on mental health support services. Mental Health crisis support can be obtained by calling the Gerstein Crisis Centre at 416-604-2337.



What to expect once I am home:

I may still have symptoms such as:

- Fever (over 38 °C or 100.4 °F)
- Dry cough
- Sore throat
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Feeling tired
- Nausea, diarrhea, and decreased appetite
- Loss of smell and/or taste
- Feeling worried or sad

How should I manage my symptoms?

1. Take any new and prior medicine as prescribed and instructed by your health care team before leaving hospital. It is helpful to record which medicine you take and when.
 - Acetaminophen (i.e. Tylenol) may be recommended for managing fever. Note that acetaminophen comes in different strengths, most common are regular (325mg) and extra-strength (500mg). Do not exceed the daily recommended dose (4 grams per day).
 - Cough suppressant or throat lozenges may be recommended for managing cough or sore throat.
2. Drinks lots of water throughout the day
 - Watch for dehydration (dry mouth and decreased urination)
3. Get plenty of rest
 - Balance activity and rest, you may need extra rest and to limit your physical activity
 - For exercise, walk around your home and do other activities for short amounts of time as tolerated
 - You should change positions when resting for longer periods of time
4. For cough and shortness of breath:
 - Use a humidifier or hot shower to help your cough
 - Use pursed lip breathing to slow down your breathing and open your airways. Slowly breathe in through your nose, then slowly breathe out through your mouth while tightly pressing (pursing) your lips.
 - Lying on your stomach a few times a day may be helpful
 - Breathing exercises may be helpful. Example exercises are provided below
5. For headaches, you can place ice packs or a cool washcloth on your forehead or back of your neck. Do not leave an ice pack on direct skin. Always wrap ice and/or ice pack in a towel and place for 15 minute intervals.

6. Quitting or reducing smoking, vaping, alcohol and recreational drug use can help lower your risk of developing severe symptoms
7. You may find it helpful to monitor and record your symptoms. You can use a thermometer to measure your temperature and a pulse oximeter to measure oxygen saturation for signs of difficulty breathing. Talk to your health care providers about what measurements to watch for.
8. Take care of your mental health and reach out if you need help. You can reach out to others virtually or over the phone, like your family physician, a trusted friend, loved one, and colleague or crisis line.

What should I do if my symptoms get worse?

Watch for these symptoms:



Watch for these symptoms:

- My fever is still over 38°C (100.4 °F) even when I take medication
- My breathing is getting worse (it's harder than normal to breathe or catch my breath)
- My cough is getting worse, and I am coughing up mucus that is green, yellow, bloody, or smells bad
- I have persistent fatigue or inability to perform daily tasks due to fatigue
- I have sadness or anxiety that is persistent or affecting my ability to perform daily tasks
- I have thirst and decreased urination.

Take these actions:

1. Call your family doctor or primary care provider to set up an appointment as soon as you can
2. If you do not have a family doctor, call Telehealth Ontario at 1 866 797 0000
3. Watch your symptoms closely to see if they are getting worse

What should I do if my symptoms continue to get worse?

Watch for these signs of an emergency:



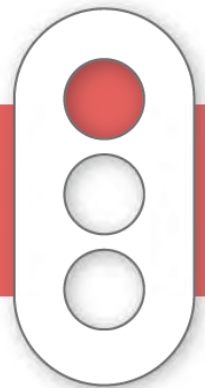
Watch for these symptoms:

- I have trouble breathing during simple tasks like walking across a room or talking
- I have chest pain with breathing or chest pain that does not go away
- I have blue lips or nails
- I feel confused
- I feel very drowsy, weak, or dizzy
- I have swelling in my legs or redness in one leg

Take these actions:

1. Call 911 or go to your nearest Emergency Department
2. Wear a mask and tell the 911 operator or triage nurse at the hospital that you have been tested for COVID-19.

Do not drive yourself or take public transportation to the hospital.

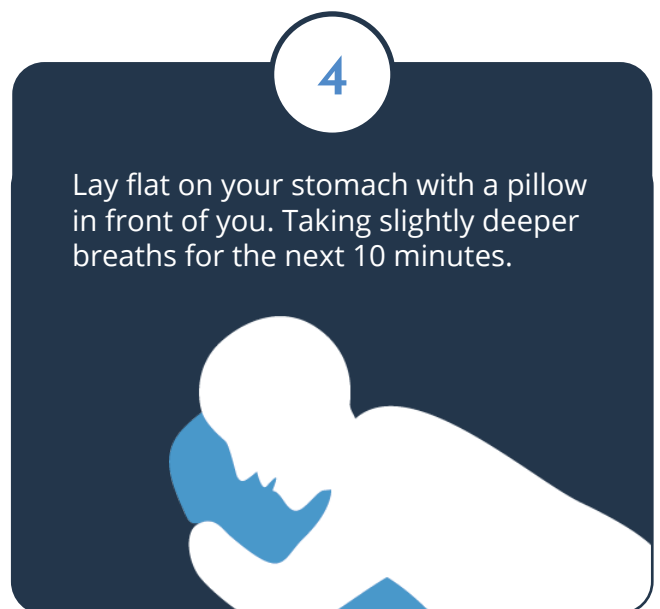
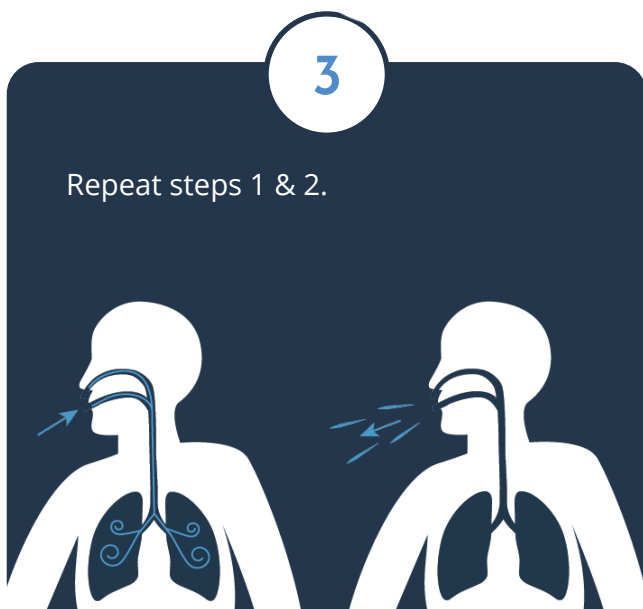
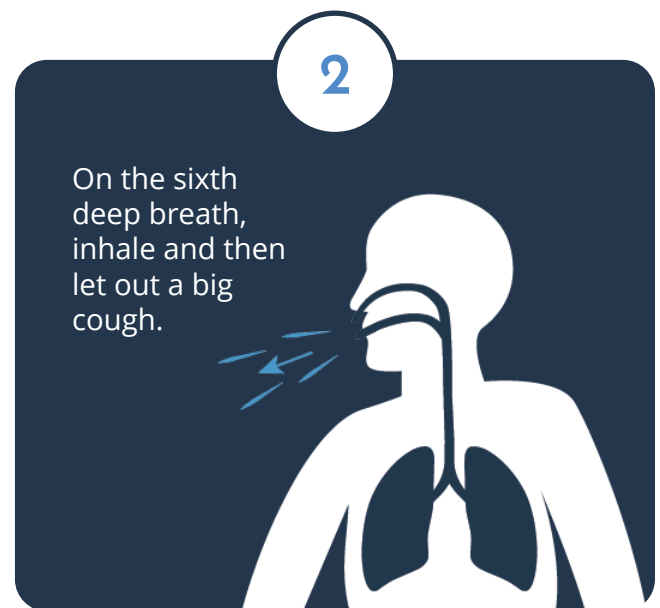
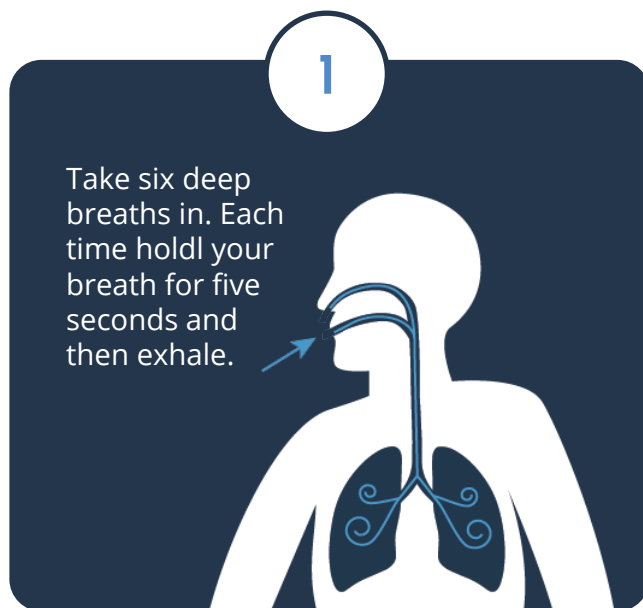


For more information on what members of your house need to do when you are home with COVID-19 click [here](#).

Sample breathing techniques for those with COVID-19

The new corona virus causes a respiratory infection that can make it difficult for people who have contracted the virus to breathe.

Doctors in Canada and the UK are using this breathing technique to help increase flow of the lungs.



Using a mask

How to put on a mask

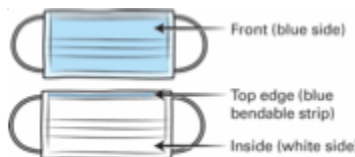
1

Clean your hands before touching the mask.



2

Make sure there are no holes in the mask.



3

Hold the mask by the ear loops.



4

Place each ear loop around each ear.



5

Gently pinch the stiff edge on the top of the mask around your nose.



6

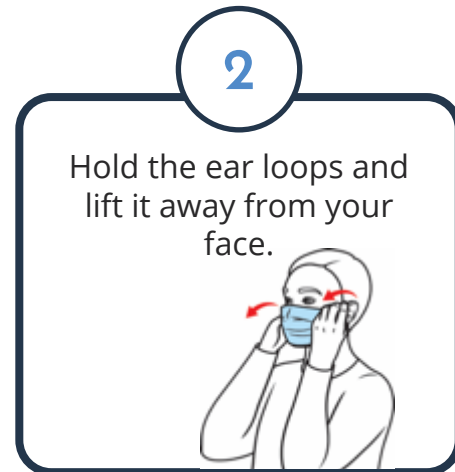
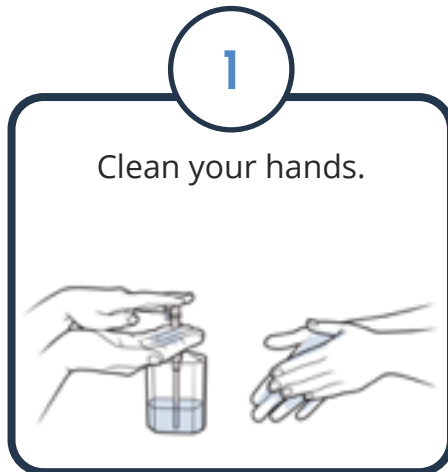
Pull the bottom of the mask over your chin.



For a full list of wearing masks do's and do not's from the WHO click [here](#).

Using a mask

How to take off a mask



Making a mask at home.

If you want to make masks at home, instructions from the CDC can be found by clicking here.

For questions on managing my symptoms:

Call your family doctor for a phone or virtual appointment. If you do not have a family doctor, you can call Telehealth Ontario or other virtual clinics, such as:

- Telehealth Ontario can be reached at 1-866-797-0000
- Other options for virtual clinics include:
 - www.dialadoc.ca
 - www.cover.health.ca

For questions about COVID-19 and self-isolation:

Toronto Public Health has a hotline available from 8:30 am to 8:00 pm and has interpretation available in multiple languages. They can be reached at:

- 416-338-7600
- TTY: 416-392-0658
- Email: PublicHealth@toronto.ca

The COVID-19 Health Literacy Project has many validated resources in print available for free in many languages. [Click here to learn more.](#)

For accessing community resources and supports for daily needs:

211 is a telephone helpline and online database of Ontario's community and social services. The service is free and confidential. It is available whenever you need support.

- Do you feel overwhelmed or anxious about COVID-19?
- Do you want information on mental health services to manage those feelings?
- Do you have money needs because of self-isolation measures?
- Do you have questions about applying for Employment Insurance?
- Do you need help getting groceries or running errands while you are at home sick or self-isolating?

211 calls, chats and emails are answered by caring and professional staff who can help you understand and access programs available to you.

1. **Speak with them by phone.** Dial 2-1-1 on your cell phone or home phone. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and in 150 languages.
2. **Chat with them online.** Visit www.211ontario.ca and click the 'Live Chat' button. Available 7am to 9pm Monday to Friday.
3. **Search their online listing.** Visit www.211ontario.ca and search by location and topic. We regularly add new programs, services and financial supports to the listing as we learn about them.

Labour Community Services keeps an up-to-date list of financial resources and supports available in Toronto and York Region. [Click here to learn more.](#)

For help quitting smoking, you can call the Smoker's Helpline at 1-877-513-5333 or reach out through their website at www.smokershelpline.ca.

Other resources in Toronto include the Nicotine Dependence Clinic at CAMH at 416-535-8501 ext. 77400 and St. Joseph's Health Centre's Stop Smoking Clinic at 416-530-6486.