

PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

COVID-19: What to Do if You Are Sick

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SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, sore throat, headache, shortness of breath, cough, body aches, diarrhea, and new-onset loss of sense of smell or taste. If you have these symptoms or have been in contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, call your doctor.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE COVID-19

Your doctor may have you come into the office for further evaluation or perform a telehealth visit. A telehealth visit is an alternative to an in-office visit. You can speak directly to your doctor and receive equivalent medical care over the phone or computer. Based on your age, symptoms and medical history, your doctor may order additional labs, imaging or a COVID-19 test. If you have any other in-person doctor's appointments already scheduled, it is essential to call them ahead of time. They may need to cancel, delay or switch your appointment to a telehealth visit to prevent the spread of illness.

TREATING COVID-19

According to the World Health Organization, 80% of people who contract COVID-19 will experience mild illness and can stay at home while they recover. Therefore, your doctor may recommend home isolation and supportive treatment of your illness.

HOME ISOLATION

The goal of home isolation is to stay away from those who are not sick and prevent the spread of illness while you recover. Symptoms generally improve in about a week, but this can differ from person to person. If you are instructed to remain at home, it is essential to rest, stay hydrated and prevent others in your household from getting ill as much as possible. Ask your doctor about taking over-the-counter pain medication for symptom relief. According to the CDC, here are some guidelines on home isolation:

- Stay isolated from other members of your household, including pets, as much as possible. If you do have to be around others in your house, wear a cloth face covering. If you can, stay isolated in a bedroom with your own bathroom. Do not share items with your household members, including but not limited to dishes, utensils or phones. Do not go to work, public places or use public transportation. Remember to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. Avoid touching your eyes, mouth or nose with unwashed hands.

ENDING HOME ISOLATION

Current CDC guidelines for ending home isolation are as follows:

- After three full days of no fever, in the absence of fever-reducing medication, at least ten days have passed since your symptoms first began and your other symptoms have improved, or
- After you have had two negative COVID-19 tests in a row, 24 hours apart, and are without fever in the absence of fever-reducing medication.

Monitor your symptoms and temperature while at home, as instructed by your doctor or health department, and report to them as indicated. Stay up-to-date with your county, state and federal regulations, including instructions on quarantine, isolation and testing availability.

NOTE: If you experience trouble breathing or have chest pain, confusion, or bluish discoloration on your lips or face, or any other medical emergency, seek immediate medical care by calling 911.

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