



Patient information sheet for self-isolation at home

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The information in this leaflet is for people who:

- are self-isolating at home because they have symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)
- are waiting to be tested for Coronavirus
- have been tested and are positive for Coronavirus
- have been tested and are negative for Coronavirus

What is self-isolation?

Everyone who has symptoms of coronavirus infection and people who have tested positive should self-isolate. Self-isolation means you stay at home and avoid contact with other people, including those in your household. Even if you have mild symptoms you can still spread Coronavirus to others. The advice on self-isolation below will help control the spread of Coronavirus.

What kind of symptoms could I expect to feel with Coronavirus?

Not everyone who has Coronavirus will have the same symptoms. 80% of people who get it will have mild symptoms. They will recover on their own at home with rest and care. They will not need a doctor.

Symptoms of Coronavirus

Very common symptoms are fever, fatigue, any kind of cough or muscle pain

Less common symptoms are sore throat, mild shortness of breath, runny or blocked nose, or headache.

Occasional symptoms are diarrhoea, nausea or vomiting.

Keep yourself safe and well while self-isolating at home

- It is very easy to become anxious and lonely when you have to spend time on your own. But remember, you can always pick up the phone and call a friend. For more information on minding your mental health during the Coronavirus outbreak go to www.hse.ie or www.yourmentalhealth.ie. Older people can telephone the charity Alone on 0818 222 024 from Monday to Sunday, 8am to 8pm.
- Try and keep active by getting up and moving around as much as possible. If you have your own outdoor space you can go out to get some fresh air but please keep away from other people, including neighbours. Keep a distance of at least 1 meter (3ft) but where possible 2 metres (6 feet) from other people.
- Eat well and drink plenty of fluids to keep you hydrated.
- Take paracetamol for your fever, muscle aches or headaches.
- Avoid alcohol if you are feeling unwell.

- Do not smoke or vape.

Watch out for signs that you are getting worse:

- If you start to feel very unwell, especially if your breathing changes or become difficult, telephone your doctor immediately.
- Take the **40 Steps Test** twice each day. Walk 40 steps at your normal walking pace twice a day during the 14 days of self-isolating. You will be able to check if it is getting harder for you to do each day. If you feel you are getting very short of breath compared to the day before, telephone your doctor, out of hours service or the HSE Helpline 1850 24 1850. If you are very short of breath and cannot reach someone, call the emergency services on 112 or 999.

When can I return to normal? (No test done)

You can stop self-isolating at home, if you have had no temperature for five days and it's been 14 days since you first developed any symptoms.

When can I return to normal? (Test positive)

You can stop self-isolating at home, if you have had no temperature for five days and it's been 14 days since you first developed any symptoms.

When can I return to normal? (Test negative i.e. virus not detected)

It is possible that you have another infectious illness, such as flu. To reduce the risk of spreading that infection, continue to self-isolate and practise good hygiene (regular handwashing and sneeze and cough into a tissue) until 48 hours after your symptoms have gone away. After 48 hours without symptoms, you can stop self-isolating.

What should my household members do?

They should follow the advice provided in the leaflet 'Advice for people who share the same home with someone has or may have Coronavirus.' People in the household need to restrict their movements for 14 days after the person who has or may have Coronavirus started to self-isolate. This means they should stay at home and avoid other people as much as possible.

If your test is negative (i.e. the virus is not detected), they can return to normal straight away. **However, currently the government is telling everyone to stay home with limited exceptions.**

Keeping everyone else safe and well while you self-isolate at home

1. Stay at home

- **Do not go out** except if you have your own outdoor space to get some fresh air.
- You may need to phone family or neighbours and ask for help if you need groceries, other shopping or medications.

2. Keep away from other people in your home as much as you can

- Stay in a separate room with a window you can open, if possible.
- If you have to go into the same room with other people at home you should try to keep at least 1 meter (3 ft) and where possible 2 meters away from them. Wash your hands regularly. When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a clean tissue. Put used tissues into the bin. Use the inside of your elbow if you don't have a tissue.
- If you can, use a separate toilet and bathroom to the rest of the people in your home.
- If you cannot have your own toilet and bathroom, make sure to keep the toilet and bathroom clean (see advice below).
- If you are going out into the garden, be careful when touching surfaces, e.g. banisters, door handles.

3. Clean your hands

- Clean your hands regularly. This is one of the most important things you can do.
- Try not to touch your face.

4. Cover your coughs and sneezes (See image 1)

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Place used tissues into a plastic waste bag (see note below for managing rubbish), and immediately clean your hands with alcohol hand rub or wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

5. Do not share things

- Do not share food, dishes, drinking glasses, cups, knives, forks and spoons or other items with other people in your household.
- Wash kitchen items in a dishwasher or with washing up liquid and hot water, after use. If you are not well enough, someone else in the house can do this for you. The person should use household or rubber gloves if available. The gloves can be washed and dried after use. They should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water after removing the gloves.
- Do not share towels, bedding or other items with other people in your household (see laundry advice below).
- If you use remote controls or games consoles clean them thoroughly before anyone else in the house uses them.
- If you cough or sneeze on a screen for example a phone or game console, wipe the screen clean immediately.

6. Do not have visitors in your home

- Do not invite or allow unnecessary visitors to come into the home.

- If someone urgently needs to come to the house, keep at least 1 meter (3ft) and where possible 2 meters (6.5ft) away from them and advise them that you are not well.

7. Toileting and bathing

- If possible use a toilet that no one else is using.
- If that is not possible and you do not have your own toilet/bathroom, clean your hands before entering, after using the toilet and before you leave the room.
- If you need to have a bath or shower remember to clean any surfaces you have touched afterwards.
- Do not share your towels with anyone else.

8. Household cleaning

- Clean all surfaces, such as counters, table-tops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets and toilet handles, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day with a cleaning product.
- Use your usual household products, like detergents and bleach as these are very effective at getting rid of the virus. Follow the instructions on the manufacturer's label and check they can be used on the surface you are cleaning.
- Wear household or rubber gloves, if you have them, when cleaning surfaces or handling dirty laundry. These can be washed and dried after use. Always wash your hands after you take off the gloves.
- Reusable cleaning cloths can be washed in a hot wash cycle of a washing machine after use.
- Place disposable gloves and cleaning cloths in a plastic waste bag after using them (see advice about managing rubbish below.)

9. Laundry

- Wash laundry at the highest temperature that the material can stand.
- Tumble dry items and iron using a hot setting or steam iron if required.
- If you have household or rubber gloves you can wear them when handling dirty laundry. Hold laundry items away from your clothing.
- Wash your hands after handling dirty laundry, whether you used gloves or not.
- Do not send laundry to a laundrette.

10. Managing rubbish

- Put all your personal waste including used tissues and all cleaning waste in a plastic rubbish bag.

- Tie the bag when it is almost full and then place it into a second bin bag and tie.
- Once the bag has been tied securely leave it somewhere safe and secure. The bags should be left for three days before collection by your waste company.
- Other household waste can be disposed of as normal without any time delay.

What happens if there are children in the house?

- Do your best to follow this advice however we understand it may not always be possible.
- Children can get Coronavirus but in most cases the illness is not very severe.
- If your child develops symptoms, they need to stay home until they have had no temperature for five days **and** it's been 14 days since they first developed any symptoms.

Can my pets get Coronavirus?

- So far we have no evidence that pets such as dogs and cats can get Coronavirus.


Image 1 Coughing and Sneezing

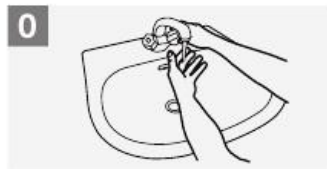


Image 2. How to wash your hands

How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB

 **Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds**



0 Wet hands with water;



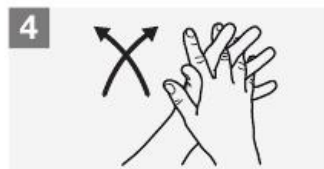
1 Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



2 Rub hands palm to palm;



3 Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



4 Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



5 Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



6 Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



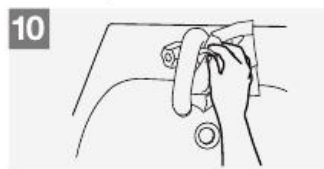
7 Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



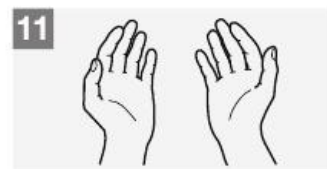
8 Rinse hands with water;



9 Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



10 Use towel to turn off faucet;



11 Your hands are now safe.



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A World Alliance for Safer Health Care

SAVE LIVES
Clean Your Hands

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