

# COVID-19

## PATIENT INFORMATION ABOUT CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

### Someone I care about **may have coronavirus**

#### What is COVID-19?

The novel coronavirus of 2019 (COVID-19) is a virus that causes infections in the nose, throat, and lungs. It is most commonly spread from an infected person in the following ways:

- Wet drops from coughs and sneezes (either directly inhaled or indirectly landing on surfaces and transferred to the face).
- Close contact (such as touching and shaking hands).

Symptoms of coronavirus may take up to 14 days to appear after exposure and they include **fever, cough, difficulty breathing and pneumonia**. Most people with mild symptoms will recover on their own at home.

However, anyone who is 65-years or older, or who has a medical condition (including heart disease, hypertension, lung disease, diabetes, and a compromised immune system) is at the greatest risk for severe infections and possibly death if exposed.

#### I am leaving the hospital and going home, **but my loved one has been tested for the coronavirus.**

##### What now?

- If it is possible, I will make alternative arrangements to live somewhere else for 14 days or until my loved one's symptoms have resolved. This is to avoid the potential exposure to the coronavirus.
- If I must return home immediately after hospitalization, I need to take the following precautions.



##### Stay at home

- I will remain at home for at least 14 days and until my loved one's symptoms have resolved.
- If possible, during that 14 days or longer, I will stay in separate rooms, sleep in separate beds and use separate bathrooms from my potentially or positively infected loved one(s) in the home.
- During this time, I will plan to have others outside of my home (i.e., neighbours, other family members, friends, members of a faith community, store deliveries) help me with getting groceries and other essential items and dropping them off at my front door.
  - Essential items: medications (prescription and over-the-counter), hygiene and cleaning products (tissues, soap, hand sanitizer, paper towel, garbage bags, etc.).



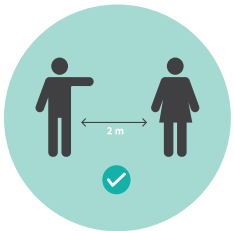
## Proper hygiene

- I will wash my hands with water and soap (for at least 20 seconds) frequently.
- I will use hand sanitizer if a sink is not available.
- I will avoid touching my face (eyes, nose, mouth) with unclean hands.
- I will cover my mouth and nose with my arm when coughing or sneezing.
- I will not share food or household items with my potentially or positively infected loved one(s) (such as utensils, drinking cups, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc.).



## Cleaning

- If I am able, I will:
  - use regular household cleaners (all-purpose disinfectant products) or if unavailable, water and detergent to clean.
  - clean house surfaces daily (including handles, doorknobs, counters, toilets, sinks and tap, phones, TV remotes).
  - clean used dishware with warm/hot water and detergent.
  - wash laundry thoroughly.
  - empty waste bins regularly.
- **I will remember to always wash my hands before and after cleaning.**



## Visitors

- While my loved one has symptoms, I must limit visitors to the home to only those who need to provide care or services for me (such as a personal support worker, nurse, housekeeper or homemaker).
- Both myself and the visitor(s) will:
  - wash hands frequently.
  - maintain physical distance (at least two metres apart).
  - limit the visit to a short time.
- **Visitor(s) should wear disposable medical face masks and gloves if they are going to be less than two metres away from me.**



## Travel

- While my loved one has symptoms, I will not travel unless an urgent visit with a healthcare provider is needed.
  - I will call ahead to inform the healthcare provider of my situation and of my loved one's symptoms.
  - I will avoid using public transportation (such as buses) if possible.
  - I will consider taking my own car, a taxi, or having someone drive me.
  - If I take a taxi or if someone drives me in their vehicle, I will sit in the passenger seat and keep the windows down.



### If I develop symptoms

- If at any time, I begin to feel unwell and develop symptoms, such as a cough and a fever, **I need to call my healthcare provider immediately, and follow their directions.**



### Recovering from coronavirus

- If I have been exposed and have contracted coronavirus, I can follow these general principles.
  - I will get lots of rest.
  - I will drink plenty of fluids (unless I have been told otherwise).
  - I can use a humidifier or take a hot shower to ease off the cough or sore throat.
  - I can take over-the-counter medications (like Tylenol) to reduce fever and relieve any other symptoms.
  - **If my symptoms get worse** (i.e., increasing and intense shortness of breath, developing chest pain, experiencing confusion), **I will call 9-1-1.**
- **I will stay at home for at least 14 days (two weeks) and until my symptoms resolve.**

### When my loved one has stayed at home for at least the 14 days and symptoms have been resolved, I can:

- Leave the home for essential trips to the grocery store, pharmacy, and other urgent appointments with a healthcare provider.
- Spend time outside and in settings (i.e., home, grocery store) where I can maintain physical distance (two metres) from others.



### I am at risk for other exposures of coronavirus

**I need to be diligent in practicing proper hygiene, cleaning and maintaining physical distance to take care of myself and those around me.**



### **I feel overwhelmed and anxious with all of this. I would like to talk with someone**

- The Mental Health Crisis line (open 24/7) has counsellors who are available to listen. Call 613-722-6914 or 1-866-996-0991.
- The Good Companions offer a free Senior Centre Without Walls program, where seniors and adults with disabilities can teleconference in for lectures and interactive discussions. Call 613-236-0428 or visit their website: [thegoodcompanions.ca/programs-services/expanded-scww-program](https://thegoodcompanions.ca/programs-services/expanded-scww-program).
- Stay connected with others (loved ones, neighbours, faith community, etc.). There are various ways to check in. Communicate by phone and other technology (emailing and social media platforms). It's important to still maintain good mental, emotional and spiritual health.



### **I need assistance with groceries**

- Many grocery stores and pharmacies are opening their doors early and limiting the first hour for those who are elderly or who have a compromised immune system to shop when it is quieter. Check with your local participating stores (Loblaws, Independent, Farm Boy, Sobeys, Rexall and Shoppers Drug Mart).
- Many grocery stores offer phone and/or online order options, where community members can purchase groceries and have them delivered to their homes.
  - See this list: [champlainhealthline.ca/healthlibrary\\_docs/GroceryStoresDeliveryOttawa.pdf](https://champlainhealthline.ca/healthlibrary_docs/GroceryStoresDeliveryOttawa.pdf).
- The Ottawa Food Bank is also operating and helping vulnerable community members. Call 613-745-7001 or visit their website ([ottawafoodbank.ca/get-help](https://ottawafoodbank.ca/get-help)). For other local food options in Ottawa, call 2-1-1.

## **Where can I get more information about coronavirus?**



### **COVID-19 self-assessment tool**

- There is an online self-assessment tool created by the Government of Ontario. It was designed to help people understand their symptoms and decide whether they need to be tested for the coronavirus. Please go to this website for the self-assessment tool: [covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/self-assessment)
- You can also call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000 for information.

### **Government of Ontario**

- The Government of Ontario's website contains lots of information about the situation in Ontario, how to protect yourself and how to care for someone with coronavirus.
  - Visit: [ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-11](https://ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus#section-11)

### **Ottawa Public Health (OPH)**

- OPH's website ([ottawapublichealth.ca](https://ottawapublichealth.ca)) provides information about physical and social distancing for older adults, answers to frequently asked questions about coronavirus, and much more.