What to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms but have not been around anyone diagnosed with COVID-19

Could I have COVID-19?

Common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Other symptoms may include chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, and new loss of taste or smell. You might have COVID-19 if you have these symptoms.

Should I get tested for COVID-19?

Yes. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have been exposed to someone with confirmed COVID-19, contact your health care provider for a test.

Participate in a public health interview

If you test positive for COVID-19, someone from public health will reach out to you, usually by phone. The interviewer will help you understand what to do and what kind of support is available. They will ask for the names and contact information of people you have been in close contact with recently. They ask for this information so they can let them know they might have been exposed. They won't share your name with close contacts when they reach out to them.

What should I do to keep my illness from spreading to my family and other people in the community?

- **Stay home, except to get medical care.**

  o Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

- **Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home.**

  o As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people.

  o Use a separate bathroom, if available.

  o Wear a cloth face covering when you are around others. If you cannot wear a face covering, other people should wear a face covering when they enter your room.

  o Restrict contact with pets and other animals while sick. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals. If you must care for your pet, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a face covering, if possible. See COVID-19 and Animals for more information.

  o Don't share personal items with people or pets, including dishes, drinking glasses, cups, utensils, towels, or bedding.

- **Clean your hands often.** Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.

- **Cover your coughs and sneezes with tissues**. Throw away the used tissues and then wash your hands.

- **Clean "high-touch" surfaces every day**, including counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe and follow the directions on the label.

Monitor your symptoms

Get medical help right away if your symptoms get worse. Before you get care, call your health care provider and tell them that you have COVID-19 symptoms. Put on a face covering before you enter the health care facility to prevent the spread of germs to other people in the waiting room and exam rooms.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, tell the dispatch personnel that you have COVID-19 symptoms. If possible, put on a face covering before emergency medical services arrive.

How long do I need to isolate myself?

1. If you have confirmed or suspected COVID-19 and **have symptoms**, you can end home isolation when:
   - You have been fever-free for at least 3 days without the use of fever-reducing medication **AND**
   - Your symptoms have improved, **AND**
   - At least 10 days have gone by since your symptoms first appeared.

2. If you test positive for COVID-19, but **have not had any symptoms**, you can end home isolation when:
   - At least 10 days have passed since the date of your first positive COVID-19 test, **AND**
   - You have had no subsequent illness.

More guidance is available for people who have or are suspected to have COVID-19.

What's the difference between isolation and quarantine?

- **Isolation** is what you do if you have COVID-19 symptoms, or have tested positive for COVID-19. Isolation means you stay home and away from others (including household members) for the recommended period of time to avoid spreading illness.
- **Quarantine** is what you do if you have been exposed to COVID-19. Quarantine means you stay home and away from others for the recommended period of time in case you are infected and are contagious. Quarantine becomes isolation if you later test positive for COVID-19 or develop COVID-19 symptoms.

More COVID-19 Information and Resources

Stay up-to-date on the current COVID-19 situation in Washington, Governor Inslee's proclamations, symptoms, how it spreads, and how and when people should get tested. See our Frequently Asked Questions for more information.

The risk of COVID-19 is not connected to race, ethnicity or nationality. Stigma will not help to fight the illness. Share accurate information with others to keep rumors and misinformation from spreading.

Questions about COVID-19? Call our hotline at **1-800-525-0127 and press #**. For interpretative services, say your language when the call is answered. **Hotline hours**: 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Friday and 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends. For questions about your health, COVID-19 testing, or testing results, contact your health care provider.

To request this document in another format, call 1-800-525-0127. Deaf or hard of hearing customers, please call 711 (Washington Relay) or email civil.rights@doh.wa.gov.