

## What you should do if you live with someone with COVID-19

If you are caring for someone with COVID-19 at home or in a non-healthcare setting, you may find the below advice helpful to protect yourself and others. Learn what to do when someone has symptoms of COVID-19 or when someone has been diagnosed with the virus. This information also can be followed when caring for people who have tested positive but are not showing symptoms.

### Provide support

Help cover basic needs:

- Help the person who is sick follow their doctor's instructions for care and medicine.
- Make sure the person who is sick drinks a lot of fluids and rests.
- If you have not been in direct contact with the person who is sick or their caregiver; help them with food shopping, filling prescriptions, and getting other items they may need by leaving them on their door step, or consider having the items delivered through a delivery service, if possible to ensure you do not come in contact with the virus.
- Take care of their pet(s), and limit contact between the person who is sick and their pet(s) when possible.

### Protect yourself

#### Limit contact

If possible, keep a separate bedroom and bathroom for a person who is unwell.

COVID-19 spreads between people who are in close contact (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets, created when someone talks, coughs or sneezes. Staying away from others helps stop the spread of COVID-19.

The caregiver, when possible, should not be someone who is at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

#### The person who is sick should isolate

The sick person should separate themselves from others in the home. Learn when and how to isolate.

- If possible, have the person who is unwell use a separate bedroom and bathroom. If this is not possible, ensure surface areas are cleaned regularly after use with anti-bacterial products. Always ensure to wear protective gloves and a face mask when doing so.
- If possible, have the person who is unwell stay in their own "sick room" or area and away from others.
- Try to stay at least 6 feet away from the unwell person.
- Shared space: If you have to share space, make sure the room has good air flow.
  - Open the window to increase air circulation.
  - Improving ventilation helps remove respiratory droplets from the air.
- Avoid having any unnecessary visitors, especially visits by people who are at higher risk for severe illness.

#### Caregivers should quarantine

- Caregivers and anyone who has been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 should stay home.

## Eat in separate rooms or areas

- **Stay separated:** The person who is sick should eat (or be fed) in their room, if possible.
- **Wash dishes and utensils using gloves and hot water:** Handle any dishes, cups/glasses, or silverware used by the person who is sick with gloves. Wash them with soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.
- **Clean hands** after taking off gloves or handling used items.

## Avoid sharing personal items

- **Do not share:** Do not share dishes, cups/glasses, silverware, towels, bedding, or electronics (like a tablet & mobile phone) with the person who is unwell.

## When to wear a mask or gloves

### The person who is unwell

- The person who is unwell should wear a mask when they are around other people at home and out (including before they enter a doctor's surgery).
- The mask helps prevent a person who is unwell from spreading the virus to others. It keeps respiratory droplets contained and from reaching other people.

### Caregiver

- Put on a mask and ask the unwell person to put on a mask before entering the room.
- Wear gloves when you touch or have contact with the sick person's body fluids, such as saliva, mucus, vomit, and urine. Dispose of gloves into a bin liner and wash your hands right away.
- Practice everyday preventive actions to keep from getting sick: wash your hands often; avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth; and frequently clean and disinfect surfaces.

## Track your own health

- Caregivers should stay home and monitor their health for COVID-19 symptoms while caring for the person who is unwell.
- Symptoms include fever, cough, and shortness of breath but other symptoms may be present as well. Trouble breathing is a more serious warning sign that you need medical attention.
- Caregivers should continue to stay home after care is complete. Caregivers can leave their home 14 days after their last close contact with the person who is sick (based on the time it takes to develop illness), or 14 days after the person who is sick meets the criteria to end home isolation.
- The best way to protect yourself and others is to stay home for 14 days if you think you've been exposed to someone who has COVID-19.

## If you are having trouble breathing

Call your doctor or NHS direct and tell them your symptoms before going in. They will tell you what to do.

## Useful sources & Information:

Some of the information sourced for this article was originally published by the CDC (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention). If you would like to access this and further information in more detail please follow the links below –

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-higher-risk.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>

## How can Care first help?

If you feel you may need some emotional or practical support, you can contact Care first on the Freephone number. Care first is a leading provider of confidential, professional counselling, information and advice services. Whilst our BACP accredited Counsellors are available 24/7 to provide support with emotional issues, our expertly trained Information Specialists are available 8am-8pm Monday-Friday to provide advice on any practical issues that may be causing you a stress or worry and help you feel more in control of a situation.

All employees are eligible to use Care first, our services include; telephone counselling, information services and online support. Call Care first on the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.

If you would like to learn more about **'What you should do if you live with someone with coronavirus'** then please join our webinar on **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February at 12pm** using the following details –

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/380465520545919499>

If you are unable to join the webinar live, a recording of the session can be accessed using the same link above after the webinar has taken place. If you wish to contact the Care first telephone counselling and information line then please don't hesitate to call the Freephone number provided by your organisation and you can speak to a professional in confidence.