

# Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and you

## What is coronavirus disease 2019?

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness that can spread from person to person. The virus that causes COVID-19 is a novel coronavirus that was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China.

## Can I get COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 is spreading from person to person in parts of the world. Risk of infection from the virus that causes COVID-19 is higher for people who are close contacts of someone known to have COVID-19, for example healthcare workers, or household members. Other people at higher risk for infection are those who live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

Learn more about places with ongoing spread at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html#geographic>.

The current list of global locations with cases of COVID-19 is available on CDC's web page at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/locations-confirmed-cases.html>.

## How does COVID-19 spread?

The virus that causes COVID-19 probably emerged from an animal source, but is now spreading from person to person. The virus is thought to spread mainly between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet) through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes. It also may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Learn what is known about the spread of newly emerged coronaviruses at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/transmission.html>.

## What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Patients with COVID-19 have had mild to severe respiratory illness with symptoms of:

- fever
- cough
- shortness of breath

## What are severe complications from this virus?

Some patients have pneumonia in both lungs, multi-organ failure and in some cases death.

## People can help protect themselves from respiratory illness with everyday preventive actions.

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.

## If you are sick, to keep from spreading respiratory illness to others, you should

- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.

## What should I do if I recently traveled from an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19?

If you have traveled from an affected area, there may be restrictions on your movements for up to 2 weeks. If you develop symptoms during that period (fever, cough, trouble breathing), seek medical advice. Call the office of your health care provider before you go, and tell them about your travel and your symptoms. They will give you instructions on how to get care without exposing other people to your illness. While sick, avoid contact with people, don't go out and delay any travel to reduce the possibility of spreading illness to others.

## Is there a vaccine?

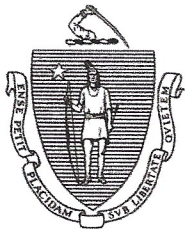
There is currently no vaccine to protect against COVID-19. The best way to prevent infection is to take everyday preventive actions, like avoiding close contact with people who are sick and washing your hands often.

## Is there a treatment?

There is no specific antiviral treatment for COVID-19. People with COVID-19 can seek medical care to help relieve symptoms.







The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Public Health  
Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences  
305 South Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

CHARLES D. BAKER  
Governor  
KARYN E. POLITO  
Lieutenant Governor

**Information and Guidance for Persons  
in Quarantine due to COVID-19**

MARYLOU SUDDERS  
Secretary  
MONICA BHAREL, MD, MPH  
Commissioner  
Tel: 617-624-6000  
[www.mass.gov/dph](http://www.mass.gov/dph)

You are required to quarantine (separate yourself) from other people because you have been exposed to the 2019 Novel (New) Coronavirus (COVID-19). If you have COVID-19, you could spread it to people around you and make them sick.

COVID-19 is caused by a virus. It is spread through respiratory secretions (mucous and droplets from coughs and sneezes) from an infected person and can cause serious illness such as pneumonia (lung infection), and in some rare cases, death.

This information sheet provides you with information about what to do and not to do while you are in quarantine. If you have questions after reading this, you can call your local Board of Health, or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health which is available 24/7 at 617-983-6800.

During your quarantine period, you should not have visitors in your home. The other people who live in your home can continue to do their normal activities as long as they are not in contact with you, as described further below, and not also under quarantine. If you test positive for COVID-19 and someone comes into contact with you that person might also then need to be quarantined.

**While you are in quarantine you should follow these instructions:**

1. Do not leave your home except for urgent medical care. If you must leave your home for urgent medical care, wear a mask, such as a surgical mask, if available. Call the healthcare provider before you go and tell them that you are quarantined due to COVID-19 exposure. For the protection of others, you should use a personal car or call an ambulance to travel to your healthcare provider. **Do not take public transportation, ride shares (e.g. Uber or Lyft), or taxis under any circumstance.**
2. Wear a mask, such as a surgical mask, if available, if you must be in contact with other people. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.
3. Do not have visitors in your home.
4. To the extent possible, stay six feet away from other people in your home. If absolutely necessary, have one person help you and do not have contact with other people in your home. Wear a mask, such as a surgical mask, if available when in the same room as that person. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.

5. If possible, use a separate bedroom and bathroom. Do not share towels or bed sheets/blankets with other people in your home. Wash your laundry separately from the laundry of other people in your home.
6. Do not share eating or drinking utensils. Wash utensils normally in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
7. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and throw tissues away in a lined waste container. Then wash your hands.
8. Wash your hands frequently using soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time you wash. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

**Anyone you come in contact with (including anyone in your home) should:**

1. Wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds often. If soap and water are not available they should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
2. Wear a mask, if available, when they are in close contact with you if you cannot wear a mask. They should be careful to only touch the parts of the mask that go around the ears or behind the head. Do not touch the front of the mask. They should wash their hands immediately after taking the mask off. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.
3. Wear disposable gloves if they have to have direct contact with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) or handle your dirty laundry. Remove the gloves carefully without touching the outside of the gloves, throw the gloves away, and wash their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

**Anyone you come in contact with (including anyone in your home) should remain aware of their health and watch themselves for:**

- a fever (temperature over 100.3 degrees). They should take their temperature in the morning and at night.
- other symptoms such as a cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, chills, stiff or sore muscles, headache, or diarrhea.

**If anyone you come in contact with has any of these symptoms, contact the local health department or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at the phone numbers below.**

If they need to seek medical care, they should call their healthcare provider before they go and tell them that they may have been exposed to COVID-19.

If they do **not** have any of the symptoms described above, they do not have to stay home and instead may continue with their normal activities.



**Other advice to keep your germs from spreading:**

1. Your gloves, tissues, masks and other trash should be put in a bag, tied closed, and put with other household trash.
2. Your laundry may be done in a standard washing machine using warm water and detergent. Bleach may be used but is not needed. Do not shake out the dirty laundry and avoid having the dirty laundry touch anyone's skin or clothing.
3. Surfaces in the home that you touch or that become dirty with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) should be cleaned and disinfected with a household disinfectant according to the label directions. Wear gloves while cleaning.
4. Your bathroom should be cleaned every day using a household disinfectant according to the directions on the label. Wear gloves while cleaning.

**How long must you follow these instructions?**

You will need to remain quarantined for at least 14 days from the date of last exposure. A public health authority (MDPH or your local board of health) will be in contact with you daily and will tell you when you can stop quarantining yourself. They will regularly re-assess you and will determine if you still need to stay quarantined or if the risk of infection to others is low enough that you can leave your home.

**Questions?**

Please call your healthcare provider, your local board of health or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health with any questions.

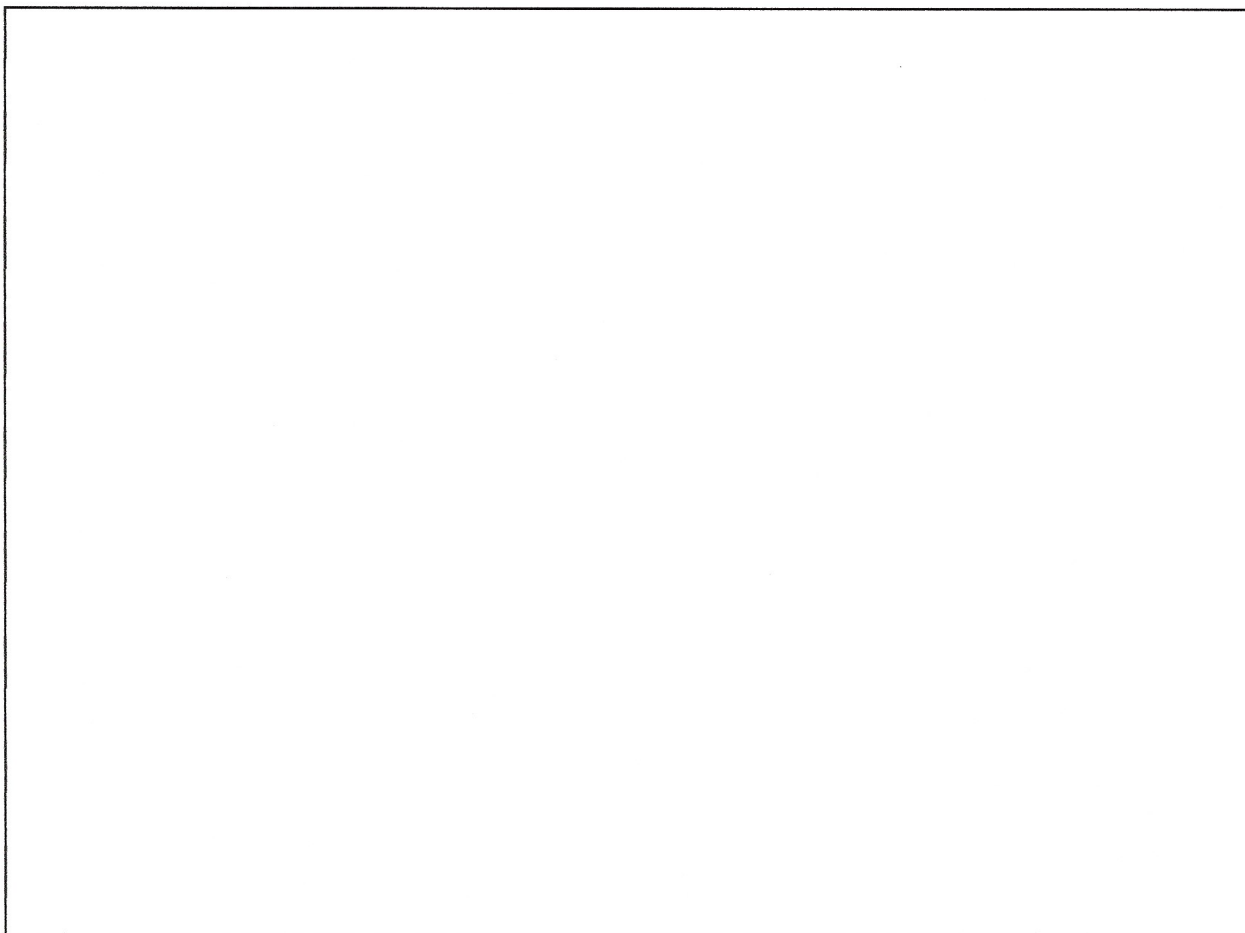
1. Your healthcare provider  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ OR \_\_\_\_\_
2. Your local board of health (Town/City)  
Town or City: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ OR \_\_\_\_\_
3. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
On-call Epidemiologist  
Phone: (617) 983-6800 (7 days per week/24 hours per day)

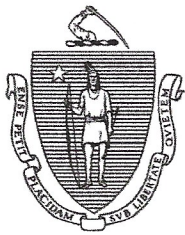
Thank you for your active cooperation in keeping yourself, your family, and your community healthy and safe.

Date provided to quarantined individual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Provided by (name): \_\_\_\_\_



Any other specific instructions may be written in here or attached with additional sheets (the attachment of additional sheets should be noted here):

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Executive Office of Health and Human Services**  
**Department of Public Health**  
**Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences**  
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Commissioner

Tel: 617-624-6000  
[www.mass.gov/dph](http://www.mass.gov/dph)

**Information and Guidance for  
Persons in Isolation due to COVID-19**

You are required to isolate (separate yourself) from other people because you have been diagnosed as a confirmed case of infection with 2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (COVID-19) or because you had a high-risk exposure to COVID-19 and now have symptoms.

COVID-19 is caused by a virus. It is spread through respiratory secretions (mucous and droplets) from coughs and sneezes from an infected person and can cause serious illness such as pneumonia (lung infection), and in some rare cases, death.

**You must remain in isolation until a public health authority (the Massachusetts Department of Public Health or your local Board of Health) tells you can leave your home. A public health authority will be in contact with you daily and will conduct another assessment 14 days after the date your infection is confirmed. A public health authority will confirm that you may leave your home once the risk of infecting others is determined to be low.**

During the isolation period, you may not have visitors in the location where you are isolating. If you must share living quarters with another person, then that person will be subject to quarantine. If someone in your home is a young child, pregnant, immunocompromised, or has a chronic heart, liver, lung, or kidney condition, or is over 65 years of age, that person is at particular risk if they have contact with you during isolation. If anyone you have contact with fits this description, please discuss this with your local board of health or the Massachusetts Department of public health so that steps may be taken to protect these individuals.

Your local Board of Health and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health will work with you to identify anybody, including household members, who are considered to have been exposed and will make required quarantine recommendations.

This information sheet provides you with information about what *to do* and *not to do* while you are in isolation. If you have questions after reading this, you can call your local Board of Health, or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health which is available 24/7 at 617-983-6800.



**While you are in isolation you should follow these instructions:**

1. Do not leave your home except for urgent medical care. If you must leave your home for urgent medical care, wear a mask, such as a surgical mask, if available. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less. Call the healthcare provider before you go and tell them that you have COVID-19 infection. For the protection of others, you should use a personal car or call an ambulance to travel to your healthcare provider. **Do not take public transportation, ride shares (e.g. Uber or Lyft), or taxis under any circumstance.**
2. Wear a mask, such as a surgical mask, if available if you must be in contact with another person. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.
3. Do not have visitors in your home.
4. If possible, other people should not be living in your home while you are in isolation there.
5. Do not share a bedroom or bathroom with anyone else.
6. Do not share towels or bed sheets/blankets with other people.
7. Wash your laundry separately from the laundry of other people.
8. Do not share eating or drinking utensils with other people. Wash utensils normally in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
9. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing and throw tissues away in a lined waste container. Then wash your hands.
10. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

**Anyone you have to come in contact with in your household should:**

1. Remain aware of their health and watch themselves for:
  - a. A fever (temperature over 100.3 degrees). They should take their temperature in the morning and at night.
  - b. Other symptoms such as a cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, chills, stiff or sore muscles, headache, or diarrhea.
2. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available they should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
3. Wear a mask, such as a surgical mask, if available, when they are in close contact with you if you cannot wear a mask. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less. They should be careful to only touch the parts of the mask that go around the ears or behind the head. Do not touch the front of the mask. They should wash their hands immediately with soap and water after taking the mask off.
4. Wear disposable gloves if they need to have direct contact with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) or handle your dirty laundry. Remove the gloves carefully without touching the outside of the gloves, throw the gloves away, and wash their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

**If anyone in your household develops any of these symptoms, contact the local health department or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at the phone numbers below.**

If they need to seek medical care, they should call their healthcare provider before they go and tell them they may have been exposed to COVID-19.

**Other advice to keep your germs from spreading:**

1. Your gloves, tissues, masks, and other trash should be put in a bag, tied closed, and put with other household trash.
2. Your laundry may be done in a standard washing machine using warm water and detergent. Bleach may be used but is not needed. Do not shake out the dirty laundry and avoid having the dirty laundry touch anyone's skin or clothing.
3. Surfaces in the home that you touch or that become dirty with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) should be cleaned and disinfected with a household disinfectant according to the directions on the label. Wear gloves when cleaning.
4. Your bathroom should be cleaned every day using a household disinfectant according to the directions on the label. Wear gloves when cleaning.

**How long should you follow these instructions?**

You will need to remain isolated for as long as it is possible for you to spread the infection to others. A public health authority (MDPH or your local board of health) will be in contact with you daily and will tell you when you can stop isolating yourself. They will regularly re-assess you and will determine if you need to stay isolated or if the risk of infection to others is low enough that you can stop staying in isolation.

**Questions?**

Please call your healthcare provider, your local board of health or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health with any questions.

1. Your healthcare provider

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ OR

2. Your local board of health (Town/City)

Town or City: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ OR

3. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health

On-call Epidemiologist

Phone: (617) 983-6800 (7 days per week/24 hours per day)

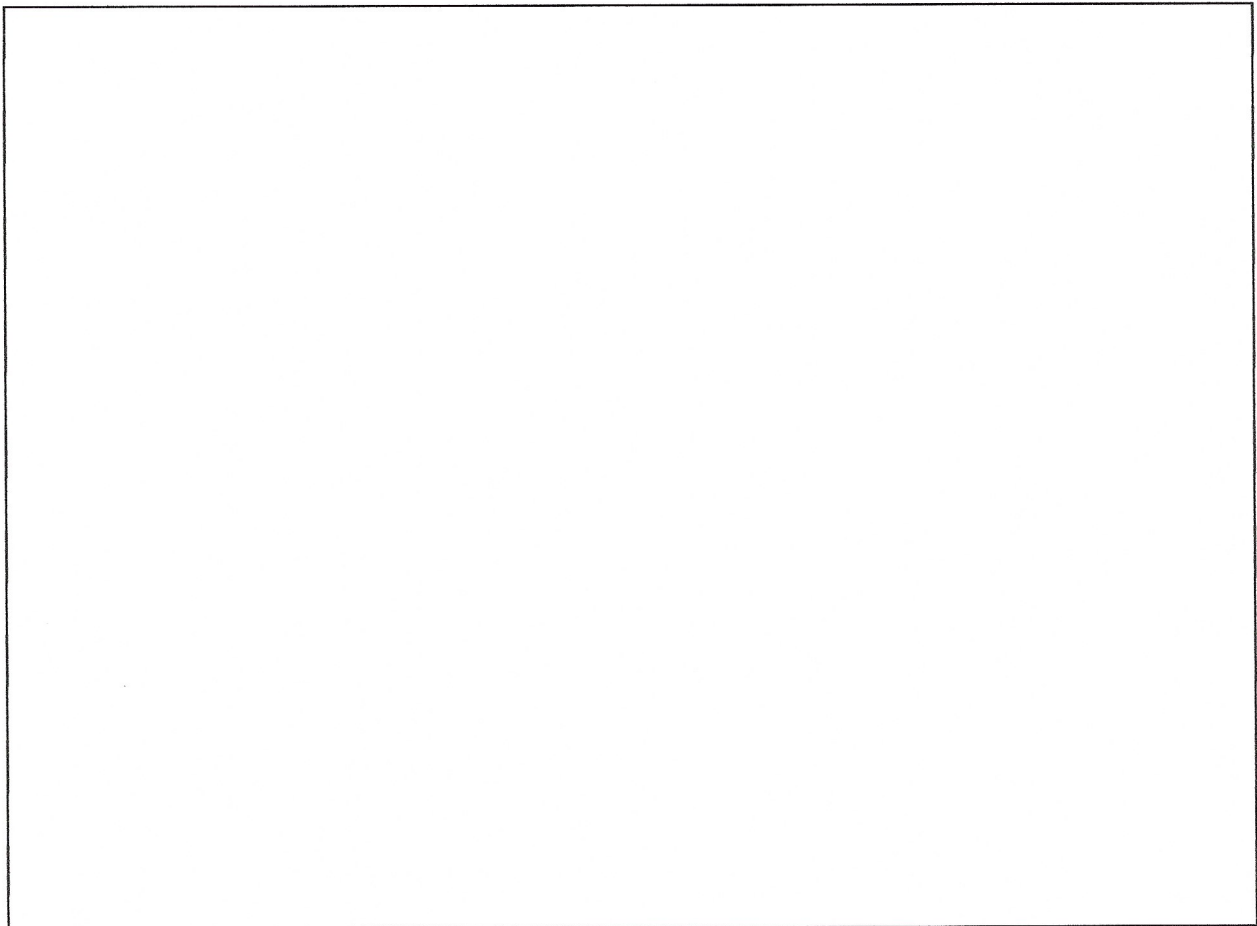


Thank you for your active cooperation in keeping yourself, your family, and your community healthy and safe.

Date provided to patient: \_\_\_\_\_

Provided by (name): \_\_\_\_\_

Any other specific instructions may be written in here or attached with additional sheets (the attachment of additional sheets should be noted here):

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