



Coronavirus COVID-19

Advice for people who share a home with someone who has symptoms of COVID-19

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The information in this leaflet is for people sharing a home with someone who:

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

If you share a home with someone who has or may have COVID-19, you need to **restrict your movements as much as possible**. This is to reduce the risk of the virus spreading beyond your household.

What does ‘restricted movements’ mean?

Restricted movement means avoiding contact with other people as much as possible. Even though you may not have symptoms, you share a home with someone who does. For this reason do not leave your home unless it is absolutely necessary to do so. This is to stop other people from getting COVID-19.

Restricted movement means that you stay at home and:

- Do not go to school or work*.
- Do not use public transport.
- Do not go to meetings or any crowded settings.
- Do not have visitors in your home.
- Do not go shopping – where possible, order your groceries online or have some family or friends drop them off.
- Keep away from older people, anyone with a long-term medical condition and anyone who is pregnant.
- Do not travel outside or within Ireland.

* There are some workers on a list that the Government calls “essential work”. These workers may be allowed to go back to work. Your manager should know if you are an “essential worker”.



Visit [HSE.ie](https://www.hse.ie) for updated factual information and advice, or call **1850 24 1850**



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland

How long do I have to restrict my movements for?

You should restrict your movements for 14 days from when the person who has symptoms of COVID-19 begins to self-isolate. If it is not possible for them to self-isolate at home, contact your doctor for specific advice.

If you remain well, you can return to normal activities, **following current Government advice**, after the 14 days.

If the person in your home who has symptoms is tested for COVID-19 and the virus is not detected, you can return to normal activities straight away, **following the current Government advice**. However, it is possible that the person has another infectious illness, such as flu. Avoid contact with them as much as possible until 48 hours after their symptoms have gone away.

If you begin to have symptoms of COVID-19 during these 14 days, self-isolate at home and contact your doctor by phone for advice.

Keep yourself safe and well

- It is very easy to become anxious and lonely when you have to spend time on your own. Stay in contact with family and friends by phone during this time. For more information on minding your mental health during the COVID-19 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.
- Although you have been asked to stay at home, it is important you keep yourself mobile 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 metre (3ft) but where possible 2 metres (6.5 feet) from other people.

1. Clean your hands often (wash with soap or handrub/gel)

- Clean your hands regularly. **This is one of the most important things you can do.**
- Use moisturiser on your hands after washing, to stop your skin becoming dry and sore.

- Be especially careful to do this anytime you have had to touch the person who is sick or anything they have used. Use household or rubber gloves, where possible.

2. Don't spend much time with the person who is sick

- It is best to stay out of the room they are in as much as possible and avoid touching. Try to stay at least 1 metre (3 feet) and where possible 2 metres (6.5 feet) away from them.
- Use your phones to talk, even though you are in the same home.

3. Make sure that any room you have to share with the person (kitchen, bathroom) is well ventilated

- Keep windows open as much as you can.

4. Do not invite visitors into the home

- Do not invite or allow unnecessary visitors to come into the home.
- If someone urgently needs to come to the home, keep them at least 1 metre (3 feet) and where possible 2 metres (6.5 feet) away from the person who is sick.

5. Be sure that people who are high risk of severe illness are not near the person who is sick

- Don't let anyone who is at high risk of severe infection care for the person who is sick or come close to them. This includes people who live in your home who:
 - > have a long-term illness
 - > may have a weak immune system
 - > are over 70 years
 - > are pregnant
- Try to avoid contact with these higher-risk people during the 14-day period when you are restricting your movements.

6. Avoid sharing household things

- Do not share food, dishes, drinking glasses, cups, knives, forks, spoons, towels, bedding or other items with the person who has symptoms until the items have been carefully washed.
- Wash the items in a dishwasher or with washing up liquid and hot water. Wear household or rubber gloves if available. The gloves can be washed and dried after use. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after removing the gloves.

- If the person who is sick has used remote controls or similar items, clean them before someone else in the home uses them.

7. Toileting and bathing

- The person with symptoms of COVID-19 should have their own toilet and bathroom if possible.
- If they can't have their own toilet or bathroom, check that the room is clean after use, and clean your hands afterwards.
- Do not share towels.

8. Household cleaning

- Clean surfaces in the home with your usual cleaning products every day. This includes kitchen counter-tops, table-tops, doorknobs, banisters, bathroom fixtures, toilets and toilet handles, phones, keyboards, tablets and bedside tables.
- Use your usual household products, like detergents and bleach, as these are very good 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 when cleaning surfaces or handling dirty laundry. Wash and dry the gloves after use. Always wash your hands after you take off the gloves.
- Wash reusable cleaning cloths in a hot wash cycle of a washing machine after use.
- Put 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.
- Wear household or rubber gloves when handling dirty laundry and hold the items away from yourself.
- 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 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 bag should be left somewhere safe for three days before putting out for collection by your waste company.
- Put your other household waste out for collection without any delay.

Caring for the person who has symptoms of COVID-19: Important points

Only one person should look after the sick person, if possible. Ideally this would be someone who is not in an at-risk group for severe infection (see above).

- If you are caring for the person, try and keep your distance as much as possible. Stay at least 1 metre (3 feet) and where possible 2 metres (6.5 feet) away and avoid touching them.
- If you have to touch them, clean your hands thoroughly afterwards.
- Clean your hands regularly and if necessary help the person you are caring for to clean their hands also.
- Do not touch your face while caring for someone else.
- If you have to clean phlegm or spit from their face use a clean tissue, put it into a waste bag and wash your hands thoroughly.
- Call the doctor for advice if the person becomes unwell, especially if they have difficulty breathing.
- If you are caring for an older person, watch out for **confusion they have not shown before**. If they aren't usually like this, even if they are not showing other symptoms, call the doctor without delay.
- Call the emergency services at **112** or **999** if the person becomes very unwell and it is an emergency. Tell them that the person may have or has COVID-19.
- If the person who is sick cannot self-isolate and needs a lot of help from you with daily activities like washing or feeding themselves or toileting you will need to restrict your movements for 28 days from the time they first develop symptoms.