

COVID-19

TAKING CARE OF COVID-19 PATIENTS AT HOME

If you someone you live with is suspected to have or diagnosed with COVID-19, follow your medical provider's or the health department's instructions.

Here are some things they will probably tell you.

How do I take care of myself at home?

If you have or are suspected to have COVID-19, you need to stay in touch with your medical provider or the Public Health Department by phone or electronic means. They will provide you with specific instructions. In general, patients with COVID-19 should get plenty of rest and sleep, drink plenty of fluids, and eat nutritious meals. They should take acetaminophen (Tylenol) for fever and pain. They should plan to stay home until cleared to leave by their medical provider or the Public Health Department. They should not go to the hospital or medical clinic unless directed to do so by their medical provider or the Public Health Department. They should not go out of their home to stores, church, or social gatherings, nor should they travel. They should not have friends come over to visit.

If you are sick and live with others who are not ill:

1. Identify one or two rooms in the home where you will stay for the duration of the illness.
 - a. Ideally a bedroom and bathroom to yourself.
2. Cover your mouth and nose with tissue or a facemask when you cough. This limits the amount of infectious material you distribute in your rooms.
 - a. This will lower the risk of your caregiver getting sick.
 - b. It will make later decontamination of your living space easier and more effective.
3. Wash your hands with soap and water whenever the hands get contaminated by tears, nasal mucous, or saliva.
4. Soap and water are more effective than alcohol hand sanitizer.
 - a. "Antibacterial" soaps and liquid soaps are no more effective than regular bar soap.
 - b. If bar soap is used, do not share the bar or the bar container with others.
 - c. Discard any unused soap bars after you recover.
5. Use disinfecting wipes or spray on all hard surfaces you touch or coughed on.
6. Limit family contacts as much as possible.
7. Do not share dishes or other eating and drinking wear with others and don't wash them together.
 - a. Hand wash them with soap and hot water separately from those of other household contacts. Dawn or similar dish soaps are recommended.
8. Have a family member/caregiver bring meals and supplies into your room but limit that person's exposure.
9. Have the caregiver wear disposable gloves (not medical gloves) while you cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, paper towel, or mask, and use disinfecting spray or wipes on the doorknob/handle as the caregiver exits the room.

10. Keep a garbage receptacle with trash bags in the room for contaminated paper products. Dispose of these with your standard trash.
11. Have your caregiver launder your clothing, bedding, and towels using standard laundry detergent with the washer at the hottest setting possible based on the materials being washed. Machine dry at the hottest temperature permitted by the fabrics.
 - a. It is not necessary to launder them separately, though it is not a bad idea.
12. Standard detergents are very effective at killing this virus.
 - a. There is no need to use bleach in the laundry, for example.
13. After you recover, thoroughly decontaminate your living space:
 - a. Launder all bedding, towels, and clothing.
 - b. Decontaminate hard surfaces with common household cleaners like Lysol, Chlorox cleaners, or 10% bleach. Clean the toilet with standard toilet bowl cleaners.
 - i. COVID-19 patients excrete the virus in their feces, so bathroom and toilet cleaning is important.

If you live by yourself:

1. Keep in touch with your medical provider or the Gallatin County Health Department by phone or electronic means for instructions and follow up.
2. Contact your Neighborhood Support Team coordinator or a neighbor of your choice.
 - a. Report any symptoms, (how you're feeling and doing), on a daily basis.
 - i. It is important that your medical caregivers know if you are worsening, but the medical system will become quickly overwhelmed if too many cases develop.
 - b. Have the neighbor or NST purchase food or other essentials and deliver them to your door, but not go into your home.
3. Follow the handwashing, disinfecting, and cleaning recommendations listed above.
4. Follow the decontamination recommendations above after you recover.

Here are some of the CDC links to review

Household plan of action:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/get-your-household-ready-for-COVID-19.html>

Disinfecting your home if someone is sick:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-your-home.html>

Caring for someone at home who is sick:

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