

# Care Instructions - Treatment at home

COVID-19, or Coronavirus, causes mild symptoms in most patients. We have determined that you are at low risk for having the virus or, if you do have it, that you have a low risk for serious complications at this time. This is best treated at home.

The symptoms of a viral respiratory infection often start quickly. They include a fever, sore throat, and runny nose. Also, you may not feel well or you may not want to eat.

Antibiotics are not prescribed because they will not help cure a viral illness. In some cases, antiviral medicine can help your body fight a serious viral infection.

## How can you care for yourself at home?

- Rest as much as possible until you feel better. **STAY HOME FROM WORK OR SCHOOL AS LONG AS YOU ARE SICK.** Do not return to work until your symptoms are better or until 14 days have passed since you were possibly exposed to COVID-19.
- Take an over-the-counter pain medicine, such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), as needed for pain and fever. Read and follow all instructions on the label. Do not give aspirin or any products containing aspirin to anyone younger than 18 without consulting your physician first.
- Take over-the-counter cold medications to help with cough, congestion, or sore throat. Follow the directions as indicated on the label.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Hot fluids, such as tea or soup, may help relieve congestion in your nose and throat. If you have kidney, heart, or liver disease and have to limit fluids, talk with your doctor before you increase the amount of fluids you drink.
- Gargle with warm salt-water once an hour. This can help reduce swelling and throat pain. Use 1 teaspoon of salt mixed in 1 cup of warm water.

## To avoid spreading the virus

- The elderly, people on certain medications, and people with serious chronic health conditions and/or immunocompromised are at greater risk of serious complications, even death, from COVID-19. Stay away from people at high risk.
- If you visit a healthcare facility, ask for a mask as soon as you enter the facility.
- Avoid large gatherings of people such as church, festivals, and sporting events.
- Cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue away.
- If you don't have a tissue, use your sleeve or elbow as a cover.
- Wash your hands often. Use soap and warm water. Wash for 20 seconds each time.
- If you don't have soap and water near you, you can clean your hands with alcohol (at least 60%) wipes or gel.

## When should you call for help?

Call your doctor, call 911, or get to the Hospital Emergency Department if:

- You have a new or higher fever.
- Your fever lasts more than 48 hours without responding to over the counter fever medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol).

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- You have trouble breathing.
- You have a fever with a stiff neck or severe headache.
- You are sensitive to light.
- You feel very sleepy or confused.

Before going to your medical appointment or calling 911, notify your healthcare provider that you may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Watch closely for changes in your health and be sure to contact your doctor if you do not get better.

These are all general recommendations. As always, contact your healthcare provider with any questions you may have.