

# Caring for Someone at Home: COVID-19



If someone you live with has tested positive for COVID-19  
or has symptoms consistent with COVID-19...

the following are things you can do to protect your *loved one and yourself*:

- **Have the person stay in one room, away from other people, including yourself, as much as possible.**
  - Pick a “sick room” - the sick person should stay in a bedroom with a door, if possible. No one else should spend time in that room, including pets and children. Keep a window open if possible to keep air circulating. If you don't have more than one bedroom, give them the bedroom and you can sleep on the couch or other temporary spot like an inflatable mattress, so you can use other spaces while they stay in their room.
  - If possible, have them use a separate bathroom. If you have two bathrooms, make one of them the “sick bathroom” and don't let anyone else use it. If you don't have two, you're going to have to clean every surface they touch after they go to the bathroom.
  - Avoid sharing household items, like dishes, towels and bedding.
  - Have them wear a cloth face covering (that covers their nose and mouth) whenever anyone is in their room providing care.
  - You, or any caretaker should **always wear a facemask** and gloves, if available, while in the same room with a sick person.
  - Place food on a tray or cookie sheet outside their door and allow them to get it if they are able. If necessary, place the food inside where they can access it and wash your hands immediately afterwards. Wash all dishes thoroughly immediately after use with hot water and soap.
  - Keep them comfortable and entertained with books, magazines, pillows, and possibly a TV or Laptop.
  - Use technology to maintain contact with the sick person. Create ways for them to call relatives and interact with people in the home without exposing them such as online gaming, video chats, etc.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after interacting with the sick person.** If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.
- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.**
- **Every day, clean all surfaces that are touched often, like counters, tabletops and doorknobs.**
  - Use household cleaning sprays or wipes according to the label instructions.
- **Try to keep laundry separate.** Wash laundry thoroughly. If laundry is soiled, wear disposable gloves and keep the soiled items away from your body while laundering. Wash your hands immediately after removing gloves.
- **Say no to visitors.** The sick person is considered in isolation and no visitors should be allowed to the home.
- **Provide symptom treatment:**
  - Make sure the sick person drinks a lot of fluids to stay hydrated.
  - Help them track their symptoms. Have them take their temperature several times a day. Write down the readings and note when new symptoms occur.



- **Stay home yourself.** Since you and others in your home have had contact with someone who has or might have COVID-19, you could carry the virus with you to work or the store, even if you don't have symptoms. Wear a mask or scarf over your mouth and nose if you go to the store and make as few trips as possible. Contact the health department nurse (517) 788-4420, option 9, your primary care provider, or call the HFHS My Care Advice Line at 313-874-7500. Notify your boss of your situation if applicable.



- **Ask for help.** Don't be afraid to ask for help or moral support. Let friends, neighbors and family know that someone you live with is sick and seek and accept their help – while not letting them near the person who is sick.
- **Afterward, you and they, should do a thorough cleaning of the “sick room” and bathrooms; including wiping down all hard surfaces, washing bedding including blankets, and vacuuming.**



### Monitor the person for worsening symptoms. Know the *emergency warning signs*.

- Have their healthcare provider's contact information on hand and available for easy access.
- If they are getting sicker, call their healthcare provider.
- For medical emergencies, call 911 and notify the dispatch personnel that they have or are suspected to have COVID-19

### When to Seek Medical Attention:

If the person develops *emergency warning signs* for COVID – 19, get medical attention immediately.

*Emergency warning signs* include: \*

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

*\*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.*

For up-to-date, reliable information, please refer to the following websites:

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

<https://www.mijackson.org/hd>.

<https://www.michigan.gov/coronavirus>

Information adapted from the CDC and University of Michigan