COVID-19 and How to Self-Isolate

You must isolate yourself from others if:

- You have COVID-19, or
- You have COVID-19 symptoms, or
- You have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, or
- You have returned from anywhere outside Canada, including the United States, within the past 14 days, or
- You received a notification on the COVID Alert app and you are awaiting test results.

COVID-19 symptoms can include: fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, runny nose, loss of taste or smell, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and difficulty swallowing. For more information on symptoms see the Ministry of Health COVID-19 Reference Document for Symptoms.

Follow these instructions when isolating:

Stay home
- Do not go outside, unless on to a private balcony or private enclosed yard where you can avoid close contact with others.
- Do not use public transportation, taxis or ride-shares.
- Shop online or have a friend or family member pick up supplies for you.

Avoid contact with others
- Do not have visitors unless essential (e.g. care providers).
- Stay away from seniors and people with chronic medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, lung problems, immune deficiency).
- As much as possible, stay in a separate room from other people in your home and use a separate bathroom if you have one.
- If you have to be in contact with others, practise physical distancing and keep at least two metres/six feet between yourself and other people.
- Make sure that shared rooms have good airflow (e.g. open windows).

Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw used tissues in a wastebasket lined with a plastic bag, and clean your hands.
- Clean your hands after emptying the wastebasket.
- If you do not have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hand.

Clean your hands
- Clean your hands often with soap and water and lather for at least 15 seconds.
- Dry your hands with a paper towel, or with your own cloth towel that no one else shares.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer (70-90% alcohol concentration) if your hands are not visibly dirty.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unclean hands.

Wear a mask over your nose and mouth

- Wear a mask if you must leave your house to see a health care provider.
- Wear a mask if you are within two metres/six feet of other people, or stay in a separate room.
- Ensure your mask completely covers your nose and mouth and make sure there are no gaps between your face and the mask.
- If a medical mask is not available, a non-medical mask or face covering (e.g. homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana, or scarf) can be worn. The use of non-medical masks or face coverings is required in all indoor public spaces, as per a City of Toronto bylaw.
- If you cannot wear a mask, people should wear a mask when they are in the same room as you.

Clean your home

- Clean your home with regular household cleaners.
- Clean frequently touched items such as toilets, sink tap handles, doorknobs and bedside tables on a daily basis.

Avoid sharing household items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with others.
- After use, these items should be washed with soap or detergent in warm water. No special soap is needed.
- Dishwasher and washing machines can be used.
- Do not share cigarettes.

Monitor your symptoms

- If you develop symptoms or your symptoms are worsening, and you are concerned, contact Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000 or your health care provider.
- If you need urgent medical attention, contact 911.

Travel to and from the hospital or health care provider's office

- Do not use public transportation.
- Drive yourself if possible.
- If driving yourself is not possible, arrange a ride with a family member, friend, taxi, or ride share. Sit in the back seat, open the window, and wear a mask.
- If you take a taxi/ride share, record company name and operator number.

Testing

- There is a test for COVID-19. The test tells you if you have the infection right now. The test involves taking a swab from the back of the nose or throat.
- You should get tested for COVID-19 if:
  o You have one or more symptoms of COVID-19, even if they are mild.

- Some asymptomatic individuals may be recommended for testing in consultation with public health. This includes if:
  o You were a close contact of someone who has COVID-19;
  o You are concerned you may have been exposed to someone who might have COVID-19, even if you do not have symptoms;
  o You are at high risk for getting COVID-19 through your work (e.g. health care workers, grocery store or food processing plant employees), even if you do not have symptoms.
- To get tested, find an assessment centre in Toronto.
- If you were tested for COVID-19 please visit COVID-19.ontario.ca and click on "check your lab results."
  o Results can take up to four days.
  o Toronto residents who have issues accessing results, or who do not have internet access, may contact Toronto Public Health at 416-338-7600.
  o Individuals without a health card must follow up with the assessment centre or testing physician directly for lab results.

Inform your contacts if you have symptoms of COVID-19

- Please inform anyone who lives in your household and anyone else you had close contact with to monitor for symptoms for 14 days from the last day they had contact with you.
- This applies to anyone you had close contact with up to 48 hours before you were sick and while you were sick.

When to end self-isolation

- If you had symptoms:
  o Isolate for 14 days beginning when your symptoms started.
  o After 14 days, you can stop isolating if you no longer have a fever and your symptoms have improved, but you should continue with physical distancing measures. If you are still unwell at 14 days, contact Telehealth or your health care provider.
- If you did not have COVID-19 symptoms but were tested:
  o Follow the advice of public health.
- If you had contact with someone with COVID-19:
  o Isolate for 14 days after your last contact with that person.
- If you are a health care worker:
  o Follow up with your Occupational Health and Safety Department before returning to work.

More information

For more information, visit our website at www.toronto.ca/COVID19 or call us at 416-338-7600.