



## Caring for someone with COVID-19 at home

If you have suddenly found yourself to be a caregiver for someone diagnosed with COVID-19, there are some basic recommendations that every caregiver should consider implementing. These recommendations have come from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other trusted resources. See the links at the bottom of the page for websites/articles referenced in this information.

### **Monitor for worsening symptoms or respiratory emergencies**

- Keep physician contact information on hand
- If your loved one develops the following urgent symptoms, contact their MD and/or seek medical attention immediately:
  - trouble breathing
  - persistent pain or pressure in chest
  - new confusion or inability to arouse
  - bluish lips or face

\*If you must call 911, inform the operator that your loved one has tested positive for COVID-19

### **Prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus**

- The patient should remain in one room in the home, if possible
- If possible, the patient should have a bathroom to use that is not used by others
- Cloth masks should be worn by the patient when near others and by the caregiver when working with the patient and cleaning the patient's areas
- Avoid sharing of personal items such as dishes, towels and bedding
- Wash your hands frequently for 20 seconds with soap and water. Be sure to follow safe handwashing techniques
- Hand sanitizers can be used as a substitute for hand washing if soap and water are not available. Use cleaners with at least 60% alcohol and cover all surfaces and rub them together until dry.
- Avoid touching your face
- All frequently touched surfaces should be cleaned at least daily with a CDC-approved cleaner, following manufacturer's recommendations
- Wash laundry thoroughly and use bleach, when able. It is best to wash the laundry of the patient by itself, to avoid contamination. Use gloves to put laundry into washer if soiled with any body secretions from patient.
- Avoid unnecessary visitors

### **Provide symptomatic treatment with OTC drugs, as needed**

- Fever-reducing drugs or OTC drugs for pain can be given to ease symptoms. Be sure to ask physician for recommendations if patient has underlying health conditions.
- Ensure the patient stays hydrated and gets rest

### **Consider when home isolation can be ended**

Most patients will be asked to quarantine for 14 days after diagnosis is confirmed. CDC recommends the following guidelines for ending isolation:

- They have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use of medicine that reduces fevers), AND
- other symptoms have improved (for example, when their cough or shortness of breath have improved), AND
- at least 7 days have passed since their symptoms first appeared

### **Caregiver websites/resources**

- [www.aarp.org/aarp/caregiving](http://www.aarp.org/aarp/caregiving)
- [www.caregiver.com](http://www.caregiver.com)
- [www.caregiver.org](http://www.caregiver.org)
- [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- [www.ccswoh.org/caregivers](http://www.ccswoh.org/caregivers)

### **Videos and resources for new caregivers**

- [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLa1B8idpEiEplIAyH\\_swKvZvTQ9yAKH6t](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLa1B8idpEiEplIAyH_swKvZvTQ9yAKH6t)
- <https://www.aarp.org/ppi/initiatives/home-alone-alliance/>

### **Videos for caregivers' well-being**

- <https://www.caregiver.org/relaxation-caregivers-series-english>
- <https://ymca360.org/on-demand#/>
- <https://www.caregiverstress.com/stress-management/caregiver-stress-video/>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HRfFdgcH968>