



Coronavirus COVID-19

BC Centre for Disease Control | BC Ministry of Health



HOW YOU CAN SLOW THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

Take care of others by taking care of yourself.

Wash your hands, don't touch your face, and stay home if you are sick.

Stay at Home and Physically Distance

Stay at home whenever you can. Maintain 2 meters distance from those outside of your household.

Self-isolation for Travellers returning to Canada or those exposed to a COVID-19 case

April 24, 2020

Review this handout if:

- **You returned from travel outside of Canada.** Unless you [are exempt](#), all travellers returning to Canada are required under the [Quarantine Act](#) to self-monitor and self-isolate for 14 days. Travellers returning to B.C. must also [submit a self-isolation plan](#) for approval prior to their return or upon arrival.
- **You were exposed to a COVID-19 case.** Public exposures to COVID-19 can happen from travel or other locations within Canada. Known exposures are listed on the Government of Canada COVID-19 [exposure locations](#) and the [BCCDC's Public Exposures](#) page.

What is self-isolation?

Self-isolation means that you need to stay home and avoid contact with others for 14 days. This applies, even if you don't have symptoms. Go to [self-isolation on the BCCDC website](#) for more information.

What is self-monitoring?

Self-monitoring for COVID-19 means you pay attention to your health, and record daily your temperature and any COVID-19 compatible symptoms. Self-monitor daily for 14 days from when you returned to Canada or were last exposed to a COVID-19 case using the [Daily self-monitoring form](#). The [symptoms of COVID-19](#) are similar to other respiratory illnesses including the flu and common cold and can also include gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea and vomiting.

What if I develop symptoms or need medical care?

Mild Symptoms

- If you develop cold, influenza or [COVID-19-like symptoms](#), use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to help determine if you need further assessment for COVID-19 testing by a physician, nurse practitioner or at a [local collection centre](#). You can also call 8-1-1 to speak with a nurse.
- Those with mild symptoms that can be managed at home (e.g., fever, cough, sneezing, or sore throat) continue to self-isolate for at least 14 days. See [When can I stop isolating?](#) below.

Important! When seeking medical care, wear a medical face mask (surgical or procedural).

- If a medical mask is not available, use a non-medical mask or facial covering, e.g. homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana or if that is not readily available, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.



Ministry of Health



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If you have fever, a new cough, or are having difficulty breathing, call 8-1-1.

Non-medical inquiries (ex. travel, physical distancing): 1-888-COVID19 (1888-268-4319) or text 604-630-0300



- **Do not use public transportation.** This includes buses, taxis or ride-sharing where you would be in contact with others.

Worsening Symptoms

- If your symptoms worsen or if you are concerned, complete the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) again or call 8-1-1 anytime.
- Examples include mild to moderate shortness of breath, inability to lie down because of difficulty breathing, any new chest pain and chronic health conditions that you are having difficulty managing because of difficulty breathing.
- **If your symptoms worsen, it is important to seek medical help early.** Please consult your family doctor or nurse practitioner. If you are unable to reach your regular care provider, seek care at an [Urgent & Primary Care Centre](#) or Emergency Department. When going in person please call ahead and tell them your symptoms, and that you are self-isolating because of international travel or an exposure to a COVID-19 case.

Severe Symptoms

- **These symptoms require immediate medical attention.**
- Examples include severe difficulty breathing (e.g. struggling to breathe or speaking in single words), severe chest pain, having a very hard time waking up, or feeling confused or losing consciousness.
- Call 9-1-1 immediately, or go directly to your nearest emergency department. If possible, you or someone caring for you should call ahead and tell them your symptoms and you travelled outside of Canada or had contact with a COVID-19 case.

When can I stop isolating?

If you did NOT develop any symptoms, you can stop self-monitoring and self-isolating 14 days after international travel or your last exposure to a COVID-19 case.

If you developed respiratory symptoms, you can stop self-monitoring and self-isolating when:

- At least 10 days have passed** since your symptoms started **OR** 14 days from when you started self-isolating, whichever is longer; **AND**
- Your fever is gone** without the use of fever-reducing medications (e.g., Tylenol, Advil); **AND**
- You are feeling better.** Any other symptoms (respiratory, gastrointestinal, and systemic) have gotten better. Coughing may go on for several weeks, does not mean that you can pass on the virus and must isolate yourself.

Speak with a health care provider if you are unsure when to stop self-monitoring or self-isolating. You can call 8-1-1 any time to speak with a nurse.

How do I Self-isolate?

Avoid contact with others at your home

- If possible, seniors or people with chronic medical condition such as diabetes, lung problems, heart disease or weakened immune system should stay somewhere else. We know this may not be possible, so please see the advice below on how to limit your contact with others in your home.
- Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom if possible.
 - Stay and sleep in a different room away from other people in your home as much as possible.
 - Make sure that any shared rooms have good airflow (e.g. open windows).



- Use a different bathroom if available. Flush the toilet with the lid down as the virus may be in poop (stool/feces).

Keep a physical distance

- If you are in a room with other people, keep a physical distance of at least two metres apart (about 6 feet or the length of a queen-size bed).
- If you cannot avoid being in the same room as others, wear a medical face mask (surgical or procedural) that covers your nose and mouth. Read more about face masks under [How to stop the spread of germs](#) below.

How to stop the spread of germs

Wear a face mask if in the same room as others

- When you are sick, a medical face mask (surgical or procedural) acts as a barrier and helps stop the tiny droplets from spreading when you cough or sneeze. Wearing a mask can help to prevent the spread of germs at home.
- If a medical mask is not available, use a non-medical mask or facial covering, e.g. homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana or if that is not readily available, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.
- If your face mask gets wet or dirty, change it. Do not reuse masks. Throw used face masks in a lined trash can, and wash your hands with soap and water.
- Go to the [BCCDC website](#) for more information on masks.

Wash your hands

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Hand washing is preferred over alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Only use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- It is best to dry your hands with a paper towel and throw it away into a lined trash can. If using your own cloth hand towel, no one else in the home should use it.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hand.
- Throw used tissues in a lined trash can, and wash your hands with soap and water.

Be careful when handling garbage

- All used paper towel, masks and tissues should be put into a trash can lined with a plastic bag to make garbage disposal easier and safer.
- Wash your hands with soap and water immediately after handling garbage.

Laundry

- Use precautions when doing laundry for the person who is sick. Laundry can have respiratory secretions or body fluids on it. This can happen when someone coughs, sneezes, throws up or has diarrhea. This laundry should be placed into a laundry bag or basket with a plastic liner and should not be shaken.
- When doing laundry, wear gloves and a medical mask, or if not available, a non-medical mask or facial covering (e.g., homemade cloth mask, dust mask, bandana).



- Clothing and linens belonging to the person who is sick can be washed together with other laundry, using regular laundry soap and hot water (60-90°C). Laundry should be thoroughly dried. Wash your hands after touching the laundry and after removing gloves.
- If the laundry container comes in contact with the laundry of the person who is sick, it can be disinfected using the diluted bleach solution.

Shared items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with the person who is sick. After use, these items should be washed with soap or detergent in warm water. No special soap is needed and you can use the dishwasher.
- Do not share cigarettes or any other items that are put in your mouth.

Clean all high touch surfaces

- High-touch areas such as toilets, bedside tables and door handles should be cleaned daily using diluted bleach (20 ml bleach to 1 litre of water).
- Surfaces that become soiled with respiratory secretions or body fluids (e.g., someone coughs, sneezes, throws up or has diarrhea) should be cleaned with diluted bleach.
- Use disposable gloves and protective clothing (e.g. plastic aprons, if you have one) when cleaning or handling surfaces, clothing, or linen soiled with bodily fluids.

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