Information for households or carers of someone tested for COVID-19

Information sheet

Barwon Health

This information sheet explains what you should do if you live in a household or care for someone who has been tested for COVID-19.

A person tested for COVID-19, either because they are symptomatic or they have been identified as a close contact of someone who is positive, should self-isolate until they receive their result. They must then follow the expert advice given, even if they are negative.

How can I protect myself and others?

Wear a facemask: You should wear a facemask when you are in the same room as the person who has been tested.

Cover your coughs and sneezes: Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues into a lined rubbish bin and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

Wash your hands: Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser. Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

Separate yourself from the person who has been tested: As much as possible, you should stay separated from the person who has been tested. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with the person in your home.

What does my household or carer need to know

- Follow the instructions above regarding handwashing and not sharing household items.
- Make sure that you understand and can help the person follow the healthcare provider's instructions for medication and care. You should help the person with basic needs in the home and provide support for getting groceries, prescriptions and other personal needs.
- Have only people in the home who are essential for providing care to the person.
  - Other household members should stay in another home or place of residence. If this is not possible, they should stay in another room or be separated from the person as much as possible. Use a separate bathroom if available.
  - Restrict visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home
  - Keep elderly people and those who have compromised immune systems or chronic health conditions away from the person. This includes people with chronic heart, lung or kidney conditions, and diabetes.

- Wash laundry thoroughly.
  - Immediately remove and wash clothes or bedding that have blood, body fluids and/or secretions on them
  - Wash your hands immediately after handling soiled linen
- Clean all 'high touch' surfaces such as benchtops, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets and bedside tables every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, body fluids and/or secretions on them.
- If the person you are caring for becomes unwell and requires medical attention, please call their GP.
- If you also become unwell with fever OR respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose or loss of smell) you should visit your GP or Emergency Department. Prior to you visiting, you should call ahead to let them know that you have been in contact with a suspected or confirmed case of COVID-19.

Where can I find more information?

More information can be found at the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services website:

www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/coronavirus

www.barwonhealth.org.au/coronavirus

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