



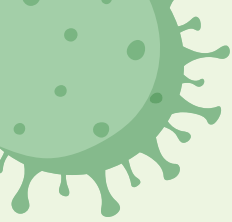
NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR  
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Division of the National Health Laboratory Service

# COPING WITH COVID-19

A GUIDE TO MANAGING MILD COVID-19  
DISEASE AT HOME





## WHAT ARE COMMON COVID-19 SYMPTOMS?

- Fever
- New continuous cough
- Shortness of breath
- Tiredness
- Muscle aches
- Congestion / Runny nose
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste / smell
- Nausea / Vomiting
- Diarrhoea



## DIAGNOSED WITH COVID-19 OR HAVE SYMPTOMS, BUT HAVEN'T TESTED AND NOT SURE WHAT TO DO?

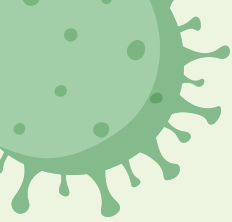
### Do's

- Do stay at home for 10-days
- Do stay calm
- Do ensure you have friends or family can assist with shopping, or use a grocery delivery service
- Do keep connected to people you care about by phone and video calls

### Don'ts

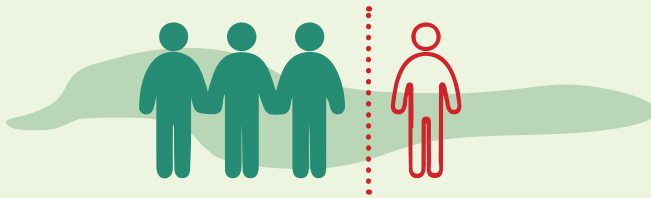
- Do not go to work or public places
- Do not use public transport
- Do not go shopping
- Do not visit anyone
- Do not attend religious gatherings
- Do not have visitors in your home
- Do not leave home unless you need medical care





## IF YOU HAVE COVID-19, HOW SHOULD YOU ISOLATE?

- Separate yourself from other people in your home, in a well-ventilated bedroom. If possible, your family should not stay or sleep in the same room as you.
- Use a separate bathroom. If you have to share a bathroom, clean after every use.
- Avoid sharing items and the same spaces with other people and clean surfaces often.
- Stay at least 1.5 metres away from other people in the home.
- Wear facemasks to help prevent the spread of the disease to others.
- Cough or sneeze into the fold of your elbow. Alternatively, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze and dispose of tissue in a closed bin.
- Clean your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or with alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60-95% alcohol.



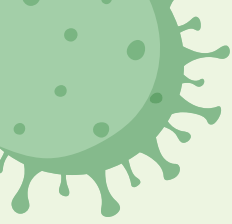
## KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

### Isolation

- You have tested positive for the virus or you have symptoms and likely have COVID-19
- You need to avoid contact with other people for
  - 10-days after your test if you have no symptoms
  - 10-days after your symptoms started if you have mild disease
  - 10-days from the last day you needed oxygen if you were treated in hospital with severe disease
- You do not need to re-test to confirm you are negative to de-isolate

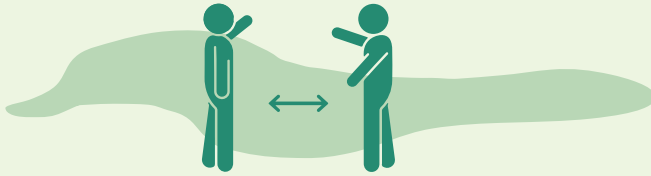
### Quarantine

- You have been in close contact with someone with the virus and you don't have symptoms and haven't tested positive
- You need to avoid contact with other people for 10-days after your exposure to the person with COVID-19
- If you do not develop symptoms you can de-isolate after 10-days
- If you develop symptoms, you are considered to also have COVID-19 and then you need to isolate for 10-days from the onset of symptoms



## WHAT IS A CLOSE CONTACT?

- Face-to-face encounter with a probable or confirmed case
- Within less than one meter
- For more than 15 minutes
- Both were not wearing masks



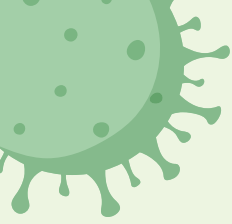
## WHO IS AT GREATEST RISK FOR SEVERE DISEASE?

- Persons older than 60 years
- Overweight
- Unfit
- Multiple medical conditions
- Medical conditions not well controlled
- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Chronic kidney, heart or lung disease
- Cancer
- HIV
- TB

## IF YOU ARE HIGH RISK, MONITOR YOURSELF CLOSELY

- Make sure your underlying medical conditions are well controlled. Take your hypertension, diabetes and other medicines correctly and on time.
- Monitor your blood pressure and sugar. If you are diabetic it is a very good idea to get a home device to measure your sugar.
- Consider getting a pulse oximeter. This is an easy-to-use device which measures the oxygen saturation (level) in your blood and helps to identify early on when you are in need of medical attention.





## STRENGTHEN YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM



**DISCLAIMER:** THE CONTENT ON THIS SLIDE DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ADVICE AND IS NOT INTENDED TO PROVIDE DIAGNOSIS / TREATMENT. ALWAYS SEEK THE ADVICE OF A QUALIFIED HEALTHCARE PROVIDER.

- Eat healthy meals, stay active, drink water, sleep well and get plenty of rest
- Stop smoking
- Take the following, prescribed by your GP in the correct dose:
  - vitamin D
  - zinc
  - vitamin C
  - vitamin B complex

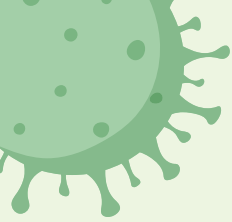
## USE COLD AND FLU REMEDIES TO RELIEVE SYMPTOMS



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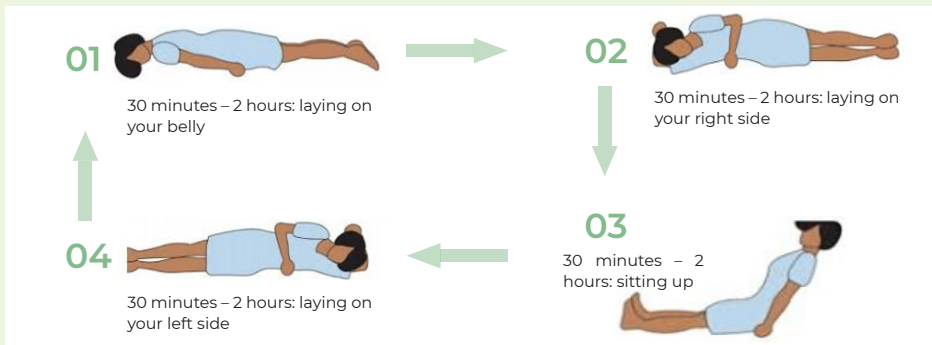
- Take paracetamol for fever and pain
- Drink warm honey and lemon water, or use lozenges to relieve sore throats
- Use Bromhexine mucolytic syrup for coughs
- Gargle with warm water and salt twice daily
- Steam or use a humidifier with eucalyptus or Vicks, as dry air is not good for lungs. Avoid using a nebuliser
- Traditional remedies known for their anti-inflammatory properties, including black seed, turmeric, ginger and other natural substances are not harmful and may help
- Do not take steroids, Ivermectin, hydroxychloroquine, or any medicines you may have heard about in the media, except if prescribed by a doctor
- Many of these treatments have not been proven to work or are used for seriously ill patients who are being treated in hospital
- Steroids taken too early may increase the amount of virus in the blood and cause worsening of the infection.





## FEEL A LITTLE SHORT OF BREATH?

- Sleep on your stomach for as long as possible with your head turned to the side (prone position)
- It helps to prop a pillow lengthwise underneath your head and chest
- You can also cycle between laying on your belly, on your side and sitting up – refer to the below visual examples



## BREATHING EXERCISES CLEAR YOUR LUNGS AND IMPROVE OXYGEN FLOW

The objective is to get the lower part of your lungs to expand so that any mucus that's collecting there can be dislodged and coughed out

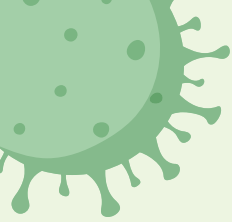
### DEEP BREATHING and FORCED EXPIRATION

- Inhale deeply through the nose.
- At the end of the inhalation, hold your breath for five seconds.
- Then exhale through your mouth.
- Do this five times - five breaths in total.
- Next, deeply inhale (sixth inhalation), then at the end of it cough strongly, covering your mouth when you do so.
- The six breaths plus cough at the end represent one cycle. Repeat this cycle twice.

### BELLY BREATHING

- Lie on your back and bend your knees.
- Breathe deeply through your nose, allowing your chest and belly to expand.
- Exhale through your mouth at least twice as long as your inhale.
- Perform for one minute.
- Then, rest for 30 seconds.

Remember to do these breathing exercises when you are alone in a well-ventilated room



## WHEN SHOULD YOU SEEK MEDICAL HELP?

- If your symptoms are worsening or have not improved after 7-days
- If you become confused or have difficulty concentrating
- If you develop a new fever or your fever returns
- If you develop chest pain
- If you are diabetic and your sugar level is very high (>18) or very low (<3.5)
- If your breathing becomes difficult, and the number of breaths you take in one minute (respiratory rate) is more than 25
- If your oxygen level on the pulse oximeter is lower than 92%



**DO NOT GO TO YOUR HEALTHCARE FACILITY.  
CALL THE DOCTOR TO ARRANGE A VIRTUAL MEDICAL CONSULTATION  
OR CALL AN AMBULANCE AND GO TO YOUR NEAREST HOSPITAL.**



**HAVE THE CONTACT NUMBERS OF YOUR NEAREST DOCTOR OR CLINIC  
OR AMBULANCE READY AND ACCESSIBLE FOR EVERYONE AT HOME.**