

Home Care Instructions for Mild Respiratory Infection

****THIS IS NOT A REPLACEMENT OF CALLING 911****

If you have a serious medical emergency call 911

If your symptoms are felt to be mild it is recommended that you self-isolate or quarantine at home. Most people with respiratory infections like colds, the flu, and coronavirus disease (COVID-19) will have mild illness and can get better with appropriate home care and without the need to see a provider. If your symptoms worsen with time or sudden onset seek emergency treatment immediately.

TREATMENT AND MEDICAL CARE

Treatment

There is no specific treatment for most viruses including those that cause the common cold and those that cause COVID-19. Antibiotics treat infections caused by bacteria, but they do not work against viruses.

Most people recover on their own from these viruses, including COVID-19. Here are steps that you can take to help you get better:

- Rest
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Take over-the-counter cold and flu medications to reduce fever and pain. Follow the instructions on the package, unless your doctor gave you instructions. Note that these medicines do not “cure” the illness and therefore do not stop you from spreading germs.
- Children should not be given medication that contains aspirin (acetylsalicylic acid) because it can cause a rare but serious illness called Reye’s syndrome. Medicines **without** aspirin include acetaminophen (Tylenol®) and ibuprofen (Advil®, Motrin®). Children younger than age 2 should not be given any over-the-counter cold medications without first **speaking** with a doctor.

Seeking Medical Care – Immediate / Emergency

It is recommended that you seek medical care or call 911 right away for serious symptoms such as:

- Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath
- Can't keep fluids down
- Dehydration
- Confusion
- Other serious symptoms

And/or you qualify the following:

- Age greater than 60
- Lung disease or heart disease
- Diabetes
- Immunocompromised issue
- pregnant

Seeking Medical Care – General

You should seek medical care if you are not getting better within a week, or if your symptoms get worse.

It is best to call ahead of time to discuss your symptoms, if possible. This may allow you to receive the advice you need by phone. By avoiding a visit to a healthcare facility, you protect yourself from getting a new infection and protect others from catching an infection from you.

PROTECTING OTHERS

Follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to people in your home and community.

Important - Stay home when you are sick

- Stay home - do not go to work, school, or public areas.
- Stay home for at least 72 hours after your symptoms have gone away without the use of fever-reducing medicines.

If you must leave home while you are sick, try to avoid using public transportation, ride-shares, and taxis. **Wear a mask if possible whenever you may be around other people.**

Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home

- Stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home as much as possible.
- Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Try to stay at least 6 feet from others.
- Do not handle pets or other animals while you are sick.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately wash your hands.

Avoid sharing personal household items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. Wash them thoroughly with soap and water after use.

Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.

Clean all “high-touch” surfaces every day

- High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the product label instructions.

Additional Information and Resources



Additional resources and checklists are available by calling the Ohio Department of Health or at their website:

1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634)

coronavirus.ohio.gov

Finding a Doctor, if you do not have one

Mt Carmel

<https://www.mcmg.mountcarmelhealth.com/locations/primary-care>

<http://www.mountcarmelvirtualvisit.com/>

Ohio Health 614 449 8524

<https://www.ohiohealth.com/ohiohealth-physician-group/our-specialties/primary-care/our-locations/>

Ohio State 614 293 5123

<https://wexnermedical.osu.edu/locations-and-parking>

Nationwide Children's 614 722 6200