

Covid 19 – Guidance and Tips for Public on Self/Home-Quarantine

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What is self/home-quarantine?

Quarantine helps protect people around you from Covid 19. It is recommended for individuals who have been in close contact with someone diagnosed with Covid-19, or have returned from a country/area with extensive transmission of Covid 19. It can be in a facility or at home.

Although most people undergo quarantine at a designated facility, certain situations may warrant allowing quarantine at home (e.g. breastfeeding child or for individuals with special needs that cannot be provided at facility quarantine). Approval for home quarantine is subject to assessment of the household by public health officers for suitability for the purpose.

If home-quarantine is advised for you, follow these guidelines **for 14 days from your last potential exposure** date (or travel date).

General Measures

- If you become unwell, call your designated contact person immediately to discuss the symptoms.
- The most common symptoms of Covid 19 are cough, fever and shortness of breath.
- If you know in advance you have to self-quarantine upon arrival from overseas, plan ahead and think about what you need for that period of 14 days.
- Talk to your employer, friends and family to ask for their help with getting food/supplies.
- Talk to your employer about if you can work from home.
- For the period of quarantine, you must not leave the premises.

Basic Hygiene Measures to take

- Wash your hands often – frequently, throughout the day, with water and soap. Scrub for at least 20 seconds, before drying hands. Hand sanitiser can be used if hands are not visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- When possible, ask friends to drop off items you need. Capitalise on online shopping, payment of bills and home-delivery as much as possible.
- Cover mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or cough or sneeze into your elbow. Throw used tissues in closed bins, then wash hands immediately.

Home and Family

- You can stay in same house with others, provided you avoid close contact.
- Wear a mask whenever you are in any shared spaces and/or around other household members.
- Don't share bedroom, linen, beds, towels, food, plates, cutlery, cups, glasses and mobile phones.
- Avoid face-to-face contact closer than 2 metre for more than 15 minutes.
- Avoid having visitors at home.
- Wash your clothes and dishes separately.
- You can keep in touch with friends and family by phone or online.
- Minimise time spent in shared spaces (e.g. bathrooms, kitchens, sitting rooms, toilets). Clean areas or items you have touched in common areas after using them.
- If toilet is shared, plan to use the toilet last; clean the toilet after each use.

- If kitchen is shared, avoid using it at same time as others. Take your meals back to your room to eat.
- The most important guidance is that **everyone** at home washes their hands regularly, avoids touching their face and clean frequently-touched surfaces.

Living with Children

- A child living in the same household should **not** attend school and other public activities.
- Minimise contact with children as much as possible. This may not be applicable with very young children.
- Explain what is happening to children in simple terms.

Breastfeeding

- Currently there is no clinical evidence that Covid 19 can be transmitted through breastmilk. The benefits of breastfeeding outweigh any potential risks of transmission of Covid 19, but the mother may choose not to breastfeed after discussing with a health professional.
- If you wish to breastfeed, take precautions to limit any spread of Covid 19 by:
 - Wash hands before touching the baby, breast pump or bottles.
 - Avoid coughing or sneezing on the baby while he/she is feeding at the breast.
 - It is preferable to **express breast milk** using a breast pump and asking someone who is well to feed it to your baby.
 - Clean the breast pump after each use.
- Use of formula milk is another option for quarantine period.

If you live with an older or vulnerable person

- People over 65 years and/or with chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, hypertension or lung diseases, are more at risk for complications from Covid 19.
- If you have to share the household during quarantine with an older person, you should avoid them as much as possible.
- If the person develops fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, you should contact your designated attending doctor.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Media coverage or public discussion of COVID-19 may make you feel distressed.

- Understand that stress is a normal reaction and will pass – it is nothing to be afraid of.
- Reach out to your usual supports – family, friends and workmates. Sharing how we feel and offering support to others is important.
- Keep to usual routines – mealtimes, bedtime.
- Keep active – working from home, engage in leisure, physical exercise within the household premises – but avoiding any contact with others.
- If stress symptoms persist and you are not coping, seek professional help.

Cleaning Guidance

- If person cleaning is *not* the person in quarantine, he/she should wear disposable gloves whilst cleaning the quarantine room.
- Wash items such as dishes, drinking glasses, cups and eating utensils after each use, with soap/detergent and water thoroughly.

- Clean all frequently-touched surfaces (desks, counters, table tops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards and bedside tables) every day with antiseptic wipes or disinfectant, including bleach solutions.
- Clean toilets with a separate set of cleaning equipment.
- Clean floors with disinfectant (e.g. dilute bleach solution), starting from one end of the premises to another (from the exit inwards) every day.
- Do not shake the dirty laundry of individual in quarantine, and wash separately.
- Waste should be double-bagged, stored in a safe place for at least 3 days (away from rain/other people/animals), before being disposed in a closed bin/sanitary landfill.
- At end of each cleaning, remove gloves, dispose in closed bin, and wash hands immediately.

Covid 19 Instructions and Monitoring for Quarantine

Basis Equipment for Home Quarantine

Certain minimum equipment need to be in-place to facilitate home-quarantine, particularly when the household is shared:

- If household is shared, separate well-ventilated room with attached toilet/bathroom.
- Face-masks (medical/surgical) and, if household is shared, disposable gloves for anyone handling clothes of a quarantined person, or cleaning their room.
- Availability of a personal thermometer.
- Access to E-mail/telephone facilities.
- Safe storage space for waste until disposal is indicated.

Basic Measures

- Take your temperature with a thermometer at least two times a day and watch for cough, sore throat or difficulty breathing.
- Stay home from school and work.
- Employees: Discuss your work situation with your employer before returning to work.
- Try not to have any visitors to your house during this time. If you have visitors tell them that you are under Covid 19 self-quarantine.
- Keep your distance from others (at least 2 metre).
- If you get sick with fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other signs of respiratory illness, call the health department on the direct designated contact person provided.
- If you need to seek medical care for other reasons, such as dialysis, call ahead and discuss with your doctor, ensure you tell them about your recent travel.
- If you have a medical emergency, call 151. If you require non-urgent advice related to COVID-19, call 141 (COVID-19 hotline). Tell them that you are being monitored for Covid 19.
- If you are on home-quarantine, you do NOT need to do a day 5 PCR test for COVID-19 – instead the test will be done at day 12 to 14 of the quarantine period.

How to self-monitor

Step 1: Do health checks every morning and every night or anytime you feel a fever:

- Take your temperature and/or that of family members who are being monitored and cannot do so themselves. A temperature above 37.5°C taken under the armpit is considered fever, and above 38°C, if taken under the tongue.
- In addition to fever, be alert for other symptoms of Covid 19 like cough or shortness of breath.
- Write your temperature and any symptoms in the log (next page).

- Information about temperature and symptoms may be asked for by telephone queries. Additionally, health officers who visit you may wish to check this log.
- Family members who are not undergoing home-quarantine, do not need to record symptoms.

Step 2: If the designated health officer asks you to report your temperature and any symptoms, follow their instructions on how to do this.

Step 3: If you have fever, cough, or shortness of breath:

- Do *not* go out in public. Avoid contact with others.
- Call the health department through your designated contact (i.e. the surveillance or public-health officer). If any difficulties, try 141 Hotline, or 4388000. Tell them you are under Covid 19 home-quarantine.
- Seek medical advice by phone with the designated officer. Tell them you are under Covid 19 quarantine and about your symptoms. Follow advice given.
- Do not leave the house unless instructed to do so by the health officer. If review is indicated, please wait for health personnel to arrive to see you.
- If someone has to enter your room for providing essential help/care, ensure both of you are in face-masks (ideally medical/surgical masks).
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve/elbow (not your hands) when coughing or sneezing.
- Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds to avoid spreading the virus to others. If soap and water are not readily available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

Ending Home Quarantine

You will be advised by your supervising public health officer to undergo a COVID-19 test on the 12th, 13th or 14th day of quarantine.

- This test must be **done at your regional testing centre** (e.g. regional clinic).
- **Call or e-mail** the regional clinic for an appointment 4 or 5 days in advance of the date you are due to undergo the test.
- Take your **own transport or use a certified taxi** to reach the clinic (avoid public transport). If you are sharing a transport in others, ensure everyone is masked and ventilation is good (e.g. open windows).
- Bring your **passport** and/or other personal identification. This end-of-quarantine COVID-19 test is **free** for all.
- Ensure you are in a **face-mask** and follow all other hygiene precautions when going for your end-of-quarantine test.
- Once at the testing facility, follow instructions of the staff.
- After test forms are filled and sample collection is conducted, you may return home following the same procedures above.
- You must await completion of 14 full days of quarantine and confirmation from your surveillance officer that your end-of-quarantine COVID-19 test result is negative.
- This will be followed by official **issuance of a document stating you have completed quarantine** and are allowed to resume normal activities by a designated health officer.
- You will still have to continue to follow public health measures advised for the general public, and report by phone if you fall ill with a respiratory illness, even after completion of quarantine.

Covid 19 Self-monitoring Form

Name: _____ D.O.B: _____ Sex: _____ NIN: _____

Address: _____ Designated Contact: _____ Tel: _____

Day from Last Exposure	Date	Time of Day	Symptoms Check (tick or cross based on presence; for temperature, please write value)				Sign
			Cough	Shortness of Breath	Sore Throat	Temperature	
1		Morning					
		Evening					
2		Morning					
		Evening					
3		Morning					
		Evening					
4		Morning					
		Evening					
5		Morning					
		Evening					
6		Morning					
		Evening					
7		Morning					
		Evening					
8		Morning					
		Evening					
9		Morning					
		Evening					
10		Morning					
		Evening					
11		Morning					
		Evening					
12		Morning					
		Evening					
13		Morning					
		Evening					
14		Morning					
		Evening					

Verified by:

Sign: _____ Date: _____ Registration No. _____

Name: _____ Title: _____ [Stamp]