

Oswego County Health Department Action Steps for Individuals Who Are at Risk for 2019 Novel Coronavirus Infection

Oswego County Health Department phone day time 315 349-3547, after hours 315 341-0086

You are receiving this information because you are considered at risk for the novel Coronavirus, referred to as COVID-19. Most people considered to be at risk have been in mainland China in the past 2 weeks or have had contact with a person known or suspected of having COVID-19 infection. This guidance also applies to those who are under investigation for COVID-19 or those who have confirmed COVID-19 infection but have been told by their healthcare providers and public health that they can leave the healthcare setting but must stay in isolation or quarantine. The 2019 novel coronavirus can be transmitted to another person, possibly before it causes you to feel sick. To protect yourself, your family and other members of the community, you should follow the prevention and self-care steps below until the local health department says you can return to your normal activities.

Cooperate with your local health department

COVID-19 is an infection with a new type of coronavirus. It may cause a mild respiratory illness (similar to the common cold) or it may cause severe breathing problems and even death. Very few cases of this infection have occurred in the United States. Our goal is to assist persons with the infection in getting medical care as needed and to prevent spread of the infection within the community. If you develop COVID-19 infection, local health department staff may need your help to locate other exposed individuals. The staff will provide those exposed with information about the options available to protect themselves and their friends and families.

Stay home

You should not leave your home, except to get medical care. Do not go to work, school, camp, religious services or public areas such as shopping centers. Do not use public transportation ride-sharing services, or taxis. If other persons are in your home, identify a room with a door that can be closed that you can use as your private bedroom until the health department tells you that you may share living space with your family or roommates. If possible, use a bathroom not used by other family members or roommates. If you must share a bathroom, have cleaning supplies available in the bathroom so that you can clean surfaces after use.

Ask family members or friends to bring you food and household necessities and arrange for these necessities to be placed in an area where you can access them without being in the same room with other people. If you have no one to assist you in obtaining food and necessary items, let your local health department know so that they can work with you to assure your safety and that of the community.

You can walk outside your house on your own property, but do not come within six feet of neighbors or other members of the public. If you live in a multi-family unit, such as a duplex, condominium, or apartment building, do not enter common areas. No matter what your living space is, do not walk in your neighborhood.

Wear a facemask

You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a vehicle) and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not stay in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

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 and wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, immediately 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. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

Wash your hands

- Wash your hands often and thoroughly 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. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Avoid touching your (or others') eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid sharing household items

Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items with other people in your home. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water by hand or in a washing machine or dishwasher.

Perform regular cleaning and laundry

Clean all "high-touch" surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables every day. Read the labels of cleaning products and follow the recommendations provided. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when using the product.

Wash laundry thoroughly, reading and following directions on labels of laundry or clothing items and detergent. In general, wash and dry with the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.

Bag garbage and place it in an appropriate place for pickup. Special handling is not required.

Monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 infection

Monitor your health by watching for signs and symptoms until the date provided to you by your local health department. The time it takes to develop symptoms after being exposed to the new coronavirus can be up to 14 days after exposure, but most signs and symptoms develop earlier. Your local health department should be able to give you a date or range of dates when you were exposed to the virus and instructions about the length of your voluntary restrictions or quarantine.

COVID-19 infection typically begins with fever and cough. Other symptoms such as tiredness may occur. Persons may develop difficulty breathing.

Call your healthcare provider if you become ill

- If you develop symptoms, call your local health department and healthcare provider. If you do not have a regular healthcare provider, call your local health department.
- It is important to call ahead before visiting your doctor and tell him or her that you may have been exposed to COVID-19 infection and have developed signs and symptoms of the infection. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected. If you have not already done so, ask your healthcare provider to call the local health department.
- Unless a true medical emergency exists, in which case 911 should be called, ill individuals who may have been exposed to COVID-19 infection should contact the local health department to assist with non-public transportation to the healthcare provider.
- If you seek medical care, place a mask over your nose and mouth while you are in a vehicle and while you are in the medical facility, until instructed otherwise.
- Attached is a letter you can hand your healthcare provider that explains that you may have been exposed to COVID-19 infection. This letter helps your healthcare provider provide you with the best care and protect other patients and staff.

Call the Oswego County Health Department if you have questions

You can reach the Oswego County Health department} at 315 349-3547 Monday to Friday. In the evening, on weekends or on holidays, please call 315 341-0086.