

# What to Do if You Suspect You Have COVID-19 Disease



## Please read this if:

- You suspect you might have COVID-19, but have not been tested for any reason, or
- You have been tested for COVID-19 but have not received your test results.
  - If your test comes back positive for COVID-19, please follow the directions on the handout entitled, "What to Do if You Have Confirmed COVID-19 Disease".
  - If your test result is negative, then you do not have COVID-19. If you have symptoms of illness, please follow guidance from your provider regarding safety and treatment.

## 1. About COVID-19

- COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) is a new virus that is spreading from person-to-person. It is currently in Monterey County and many parts of the world.
- COVID-19 is spread:
  - through respiratory droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes,
  - between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet),
  - by touching a surface or object with the virus and then touching the mouth, nose, or eyes.
- Most people will have only a minor illness with COVID-19. However, some people are at higher risk for serious COVID-19 disease, including people:
  - over 60 years of age,
  - with chronic health conditions such as lung disease, heart disease, or diabetes,
  - with weakened immune systems,
  - who are pregnant.

## 2. There is no specific medicine to treat COVID-19 disease

- Get plenty of rest, drink lots of fluids, eat healthy foods, and manage stress.
- Use acetaminophen or ibuprofen to reduce fever, aches and pain.
- Additional care in the hospital can help manage more serious illness or complications.

## 3. Monitor your symptoms

- If you are over 60 years of age or have a condition that puts you at higher risk for severe disease, monitor your illness even more closely and discuss any concerns with your doctor.
- If your symptoms get worse, you have difficulty breathing, or you develop other concerning symptoms, call your doctor immediately.
- If it is an emergency, call 911.

## 4. Call ahead before visiting a hospital, emergency room, or doctor's office

- If you need to visit a hospital, emergency room, or doctor's office, call ahead to notify them that you might have COVID-19. This will help the hospital or doctor's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected.

## 5. Stay at home except to get medical care

If you have symptoms of possible COVID-19 infection but have not been tested or are waiting for test results, you can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 to others in your home and community by doing the following:

- **Stay at home.**
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
- Do not go out of the home except to get medical care.
- If you need medical care, avoid using public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.

## 6. Protect your family and friends

- Clean your hands often with soap and water, or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with your elbow or a tissue and throw away used tissue in a lined trash can. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water afterwards.
- Avoid sharing personal household items like dishes, glasses, or bedding.
- Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects (like doorknobs and light switches). Regular household cleaners are effective.

## 7. Self-isolate at home until:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since recovery which is defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
- At least 7 days have passed since symptoms first appeared

## 8. Return to work

- People who work in a healthcare setting should notify their occupational health office and follow any additional instructions before returning to work.

## 9. Get more information on COVID-19

- Monterey County Health Department webpage: [www.mtyhd.org/covid19](http://www.mtyhd.org/covid19)
- Centers for Disease Control & Prevention webpage: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- If you have any questions, call your doctor.
- How to disinfect your home if someone is sick: [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-your-home.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-your-home.html)