Prevention Steps for People Being Tested for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) shares these recommendations adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) intended for people being tested for COVID-19. This information will help answer questions on what expect and how to care for yourself following testing.

It may take up to three to four days to receive your test results

Your healthcare provider who ordered the test will call to speak with you about your results.

Stay home except to get medical care

You may have COVID-19. People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 should isolate at home during their illness. You should restrict activities outside your home, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.

Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home

As much as possible, you should stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Also, you should use a separate bathroom, if available.

You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while you are sick with COVID-19, just like you would around other people. Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people sick with COVID-19 limit contact with animals until more information is known about the virus. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick. If you are sick with COVID-19, avoid contact with your pet, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a facemask. See COVID-19 and Animals for more information.

Call ahead before visiting your healthcare provider

If you have a medical appointment, call your healthcare provider and tell them that you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

Wear a facemask

If you have one, you should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets. If you are not able to wear a facemask at home (e.g., causes trouble breathing), then the people who live with you should not stay in the same room. As an alternative, they should wear a facemask upon entering your room.

If you need to go to a healthcare facility, you should always wear a facemask before entering.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

Always 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 with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food. If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.

Soap and water are the best option if hands are visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Avoid sharing personal household items

While ill, you should never share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.

Clean all "high-touch" surfaces everyday

High-touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Monitor your symptoms

*Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening (e.g., difficulty breathing). **Before seeking care, call your healthcare provider** and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19. Put on a facemask before you enter any healthcare facility. These precautionary steps will help keep other people in the healthcare facility or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.*

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 9-1-1, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or are being evaluated for COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services (EMS) arrive.

If your test is positive for COVID-19

Patients with confirmed COVID-19 should remain under home isolation precautions until the risk of secondary transmission to others is thought to be low. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions should be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with healthcare providers and state and local health departments.

Prevention Steps for Household Members, Intimate Partners, and Caregivers of a Patient Who May Have COVID-19

RIDOH shares these [recommendations](#) adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that are intended for household members, intimate partners, and caregivers who may have close contact[2] with a person who has symptoms of COVID-19.

Close contacts should monitor their own health and should quarantine at home for 14 days. Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, such as a fever, cough, or shortness of breath.

Help the patient follow their healthcare provider's instructions for medication(s) and care. You should help the patient with basic needs in the home and provide or coordinate support for getting groceries, prescriptions, and other personal needs.

Monitor the patient's symptoms. If the patient is getting sicker, call his or her healthcare provider and tell them that the patient was tested for COVID-19. If the patient has a medical emergency and you need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that the patient has, or is being evaluated for COVID-19.

Household members should stay in another room or be separated from the patient as much as possible. Household members should use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if available.

Do not host visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home.

Household members should care for any pets in the home. A person who may have COVID-19 should not handle pets or other animals while sick. For more information, see [COVID-19 and Animals](#).

Make sure that shared spaces in the home have sufficient air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window, weather permitting.

Perform hand hygiene frequently. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60 to 95% 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.

The patient should always wear a facemask when around other people. If the patient is not able to wear a facemask (e.g., causes trouble breathing), you, as the caregiver, should wear a mask when you are in the same room as the patient.

If you have them, wear a disposable facemask and gloves when you touch or have contact with the patient's blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, or urine. Throw out disposable facemasks and gloves after using them. Do not reuse. Then, immediately clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Avoid sharing household items with the patient. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After the patient uses these items, you should wash them thoroughly (see below "Wash laundry thoroughly").

Clean all "high-touch" surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.

Wash laundry thoroughly. Immediately remove and wash clothes or bedding that have blood, stool, or body fluids on them. Wear disposable gloves while handling soiled items and keep soiled items away from your body. Clean your hands (with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) immediately after removing your gloves. Read and follow directions on labels of laundry or clothing items and detergent. In general, using a normal laundry detergent according to washing machine instructions and dry thoroughly using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.

Place all used disposable gloves, facemasks, and other contaminated items in a lined container before disposing of them with other household waste. Clean your hands (with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) immediately after handling these items. Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.

Discuss any additional questions with your state or local health department or healthcare provider. Check available hours when contacting your local health department. Visit RIDOH's webpage on COVID-19 for more information.

Footnote

[2]Close contact is defined as:

a) Being within approximately 6 feet (2 meters) of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time; close contact can occur while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a health care waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case.

b) Having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on).