

Discharge Instructions – Patients with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19

Your doctor and public health staff have determined that you can be isolated and monitored at home. If you are waiting for your test results, the doctor or Department of Health will call you with your results.

Please follow the prevention steps below until a doctor, healthcare provider, or health department says you can return to your normal activities.

When leaving the hospital:

- Wear a mask when you leave the hospital and keep it on until you get home.
- Do not use public transportation.
- It is best for you to walk home if you live within walking distance and feel well enough to walk home.
- If you have to take a car, wear a mask and leave the window open.

While waiting for your COVID-19 test result or if your COVID-19 test is positive:

ISOLATE: Stay home except to get medical care! Separate yourself from other people and pets in your home:

- Do not go to work, school, or public areas, such as stores or movie theaters, or social gatherings.
- Do not use public transportation.
- If available, stay in a separate bedroom and use a separate bathroom.
- Ask others to care for your pets.
- Wear a facemask when around other people or pets.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. If a tissue is not available, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve (not your hands).
- Throw tissues away in trashcan that has a bag in it. Empty your trash daily.
- Always wash your hands after you throw away the tissue or garbage.

CLEAN: Wash your hands often:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds (sing “Happy Birthday” to yourself while washing hands). You can use hand sanitizer containing alcohol if soap and water is not available.
- If using hand sanitizer with alcohol, cover all surfaces of your hands and rub hands together until they feel dry.
- Use soap and water if your hands look dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth. Clean your hands if you do touch your face.

Do not share household items:

- Do not share cups, plates, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or clothes with other people or pets.
- After you use these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.

- Place your laundry in a washable bag. Do not use a communal laundry area.
- If you have your own washing machine, read and follow directions on laundry and detergent labels. Use normal laundry detergent according to washing machine instructions and dry thoroughly using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.

Clean “often touched surfaces” each day to kill germs:

- Clean “often touched surfaces” such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables with **a household cleaner with bleach** according to the label instructions.
- Clean immediately any surfaces that have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.

Self-care:

- **Rest as much as possible.** Slowly start to do more each day.
- **Take the medicines** recommended by your doctor for fever, body aches, cough, or headaches.
- **Drink more liquids as directed** to help thin and loosen mucus so it is easier to cough up. Liquids such as water, fruit juice, and broth also help keep you hydrated.
- **Soothe a sore throat** by gargling with warm salt water. Make salt water by dissolving ¼ teaspoon salt in 1 cup warm water (8 ounces). Older children and adults can also use throat lozenges, ice chips, or sore throat spray.
- **Use a humidifier or vaporizer** to increase air moisture in your home. This may make it easier to breathe and help decrease coughing.
- **Use saline nasal drops as directed** to relieve congestion.
- **Apply petroleum-based jelly around the outside of nostrils** to decrease irritation from blowing your nose.
- **DO NOT smoke or vape.** Nicotine and other chemicals in cigarettes and cigars can make your symptoms worse.

Monitor your symptoms:

- Seek medical attention right away if your symptoms get worse, such as if you are having difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, new confusion or inability to arouse, or bluish lips or face.
- If you have a medical emergency, call 911 and notify the EMS personnel that you have or are being evaluated for COVID-19. Put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

Call ahead before visiting your doctor:

- Before you seek care or go to an appointment, call your doctor or dentist and tell them that you have COVID-19 or are being evaluated for COVID-19.
 - *This will help the doctor’s office decide if the appointment can be rescheduled or take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.*
- Put on a facemask before you enter the facility or doctor’s office.
 - *These steps will help prevent the spread of infection to other people in the office or waiting room.*

When to end home isolation if you are positive for COVID-19:

- You should stay on home isolation until these 3 things have happened:
 1. You have no fever for at least 72 hours (3 full days), without taking medicines that treat fever like Tylenol or aspirin.

2. Your other symptoms, such as cough, have improved..
3. At least 7 days have passed since your symptoms started.

For more information:

- Visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov or the NewYork-Presbyterian website at www.nyp.org.
- Call the NewYork-Presbyterian COVID-19 hotline at 646-697-4000.