



Staying home with COVID-19: How to prepare and what to do

For Autistic people and their parents/carers



About this information sheet

This information sheet helps you plan in case you get sick with coronavirus (COVID-19). It also explains how to keep others in your home safe and what kind of care you will need while sick.

Prepare your home

If you get sick with COVID-19 you need to stay at home and isolate. You can find out how long you must isolate for on the [Victorian Government's website](#).

Make sure you have things ready to look after yourself and feel comfortable.

You will need:

- Drinks and long-lasting foods
- Your usual medications
- Medication that lessens pain (like paracetamol or ibuprofen)
- Thermometer (if available)
- 2 rapid antigen tests per person (including a spare one in case of false negative)
- Nurse-on-call phone number (1300 60 60 24)
- Your doctor's phone number
- Things to keep you entertained, such as toys or games

Plan your supports

Make sure you arrange beforehand any support you might need while staying home. For example, would you need support with:

- Delivery of groceries and supplies to your door?
- Daily living tasks?
- Care for your children or dependants?
- Mental health and wellbeing check-ins?
- Transport to medical centres or testing sites?
- Pet care (e.g., food, medications and exercise)?

Keep others safe

If you are sick with COVID-19 at home, the people you live with can catch it from you and get sick too.

Help stop them from getting sick by:

- Opening windows to allow the air in your room to move around
- Washing your hands and cleaning surfaces you touch
- Wearing a mask when others are with you
- Staying in your room away from others as much as you can

Check and respond to symptoms

Most people who get sick with COVID-19 feel only a little unwell.

If you get sick with COVID-19, you will need to check how you feel and for symptoms, if you have any.

There are three different symptom levels. Answer the guiding questions below to determine your symptom level and how to act. You should go through all three checklists.

Symptom Level 1

Do you feel a bit unwell, but okay overall? For example, are you able to walk around the house and do normal things?

Do you have symptoms only from this list:

- Runny or blocked nose
- Sore throat
- Aches and pains
- Dry cough or coughing up mucous
- Tired
- Headache
- Loss of taste and smell
- Not hungry or feeling sick
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- High temperature (over 38 degrees Celsius)
- Shaking or shivering
- Feeling dizzy
- Mild shortness of breath when walking quickly
- Feeling sad, worried or scared

If the answer is yes, your symptoms are mild.

Action: Continue care at home.

- Rest
- Drink lots of water
- Eat healthy meals
- Keep taking your usual medications
- Drink oral rehydration fluids (like GastrolYTE and HydrALYTE). These are special fluids that replace salts and water in your body if you have vomiting or diarrhoea

Symptom Level 2

Do you feel very unwell and tired? For example, are you struggling to take care of yourself?

Do you have any of these symptoms:

- A bit short of breath when walking around the house
- Unable to eat anything for more than 24 hours
- Unable to drink anything for more than 12 hours
- Not peeing very often

If the answer is yes, your symptoms are worsening.

Action: You need to be on alert.

Contact your doctor or Nurse On-Call (1300 606 024) as soon as possible. They will tell you what to do next.

Symptom Level 3

Do you feel extremely unwell? For example, are you having difficulty breathing, cannot take care of yourself?

Do you have any of these symptoms:

- Feeling short of breath when resting
- Finding it hard to finish sentences
- Very bad chest pain or discomfort in your chest
- Lips or face turning blue
- Skin cold, pale or wet with sweat
- Very bad headaches
- Fainting due to dizziness
- Feeling confused

If the answer is yes, your symptoms are severe.

Action: You need to act immediately.

Call triple zero (000). Tell the person who answers you that you have coronavirus (COVID-19).

Please note: This article is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to act as a substitute for medical advice. We recommend that you consult a medical professional if you require medical advice on isolating with COVID-19.