



## **Discharge Guide for Patients with COVID-19**

The following information will help you safely continue your recovery at home. These steps will help keep your family and friends safe while they help in your recovery:

### **1. Stay Home**

- Restrict activities outside of your home, except for getting medical care.
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
- Avoid using public transportation, ridesharing, or taxis.
- Remain on home isolation and follow the precautions listed below for the duration recommended by your healthcare provider or until:
  - I. **At least 14 days after the start of symptoms; AND**
  - II. **At least 72 hours after your fever ends** (without the use of fever reducing medication like acetaminophen or ibuprofen); **AND**
  - III. **Have significant improvement in respiratory symptoms** (including cough, shortness of breath).
- This means that if you still have a fever and symptoms after 7 days you need to wait another 3 days after your fever ends and your symptoms improve before stopping isolation.

### **2. At home, separate yourself as much as possible from friends and family.**

- Stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home.
- Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Limit your use of common areas.
- Limit visitors to those who have an essential need to be in the home.

### **3. Wear a facemask during the home isolation period when**

- You are around other people or leave the house for a doctor visit or medical test.
- Masks should not be touched or handled during use.
- Remove the mask by grasping the ear loops. Avoid touching the front of the mask.
- Discard the mask after use and wash your hands.
- 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.

### **4. When leaving your house for a doctor's appointment.**

- Call ahead before visiting your doctor. Tell them that you have COVID-19. This will help the doctor's office take steps to keep other people safe.
- Put on a facemask before you enter the facility.

### **5. Monitor your symptoms**



- Seek care or immediately call 911 if your symptoms worsen such as developing more difficulty with breathing, new chest pain, severe vomiting or diarrhea, or you feel confused or dizzy.
- If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

#### 6. **Discontinuing home isolation**

- When you are ready to discontinue home isolation according to the guidance above, the New Jersey Department of Health advises that you do not need to be cleared from home isolation by your doctor or local health department, although some employers may require such clearance before returning to work.
- **If your employer requires you to be re-tested** before returning to work, contact your primary care provider or visit Hackensack Meridian Health Urgent Care offices. <https://www.hackensackmeridianhealth.org/services/convenient-care/>
- **If your employer requires clearance** to return to work, you should contact your employer's Occupational Health office, your primary care provider, or use the Hackensack Meridian Health TeleHealth service at [www.ConvenientCareNow.com](http://www.ConvenientCareNow.com) (use discount code HMMH20).

#### **To Prevent Spread of COVID-19:**

##### 1. **Clean your hands often**

- Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Alternatively, 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 instead of sanitizer if your hands are visibly dirty.
- It is preferable to use disposable paper towels to dry hands. If these are not available, use clean, dry cloth towels and replace them when they become damp from repeated use.

##### 2. **Cover your coughs and sneezes**

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or the inside of your elbow when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- Immediately wash your hands.

##### 3. **Avoid sharing personal household items**

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home.
- After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.



#### 4. Disinfect Surfaces daily

- Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday: light switches, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
- Use household cleaners to clean and disinfect surfaces that you have come in contact with.

#### 5. Protect your pets

- You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while you are sick.
- If you do have contact with pets, wash your hands before and after the interaction and wear a facemask.

#### For additional information:

See the CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html>

### **Prevention Steps for Household Members or Caregivers of Patients with COVID-19**

The following information will help Household Members or Caregivers to remain safe while helping someone recover from COVID-19 infection.

#### 1. Monitor the patient’s symptoms

- If the patient’s symptoms worsen (e.g. difficulty breathing, new fevers), call their healthcare provider and tell them the patient has COVID-19.
- If the patient has a medical emergency and you need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that the patient has COVID-19.

#### 2. Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Soap and water should be used instead of sanitizer if your hands are visibly dirty.
- Alternatively, 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.
- Always clean your hands after caring for the patient or any items used by the patient

#### 3. Limit contact with the patient

- 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.
- Household members should care for any pets in the home, not the patient.



- LIMIT VISITORS - Prohibit visitors from entering the home if they do not have a very important reason.
  
- 4. Wear a face mask**
  - Wear a face mask when you and the patient are in the same room.
  - Masks should not be touched or handled during use.
  - If the mask gets wet or dirty from secretions, it must be replaced immediately with a new clean, dry mask.
  - Remove the mask using the appropriate technique – that is, do not touch the front, but instead grasp ear loops and remove.
  - Discard the mask immediately after use and wash your hands.
  
- 5. Actions to reduce risk of exposure**
  - Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
  - Ensure that shared spaces in the home have good air flow, such as by an air conditioner or an opened window, weather permitting.
  
- 6. Avoid sharing household items with the patient**
  - You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items. After the patient uses these items, wash them thoroughly.
  
- 7. Disinfect Surfaces daily**
  - Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday: light switches, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
  - Use household cleaners to clean and disinfect surfaces that you have come in contact with.
  
- 8. Wash laundry thoroughly**
  - Use normal detergent and a high temperature setting if possible.
  
- 9. Monitor yourself for symptoms**
  - Call your healthcare provider right away if you develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (e.g., fever (temperature greater than or equal to 100.4, cough, shortness of breath), and inform them that you are a close contact of someone with COVID-19 **before** coming into the office. This will help the healthcare provider’s office take appropriate precautions to prevent exposure to others.

For additional information, see the CDC website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html>