City of St. Joseph Health Department COVID-19

WHAT TO DO IF YOU WERE
POTENTIALLY EXPOSED TO SOMEONE
WITH CONFIRMED CORONAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)

If you think you have been exposed to someone with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19, follow the steps below to monitor your health to avoid spreading the disease to others if you get sick.

WHAT IS CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)?
COVID-19 is a respiratory disease caused by a virus called SARS-CoV-2. The most common symptoms of the disease are fever, cough, shortness of breath, and fatigue. Most people with COVID-19 will have mild disease but some people will get sicker and may need to be hospitalized.

HOW DO I KNOW IF I WAS EXPOSED?
You generally need to be in close contact with a sick person to get infected. Close contact includes:
- Living in the same household as a sick person with COVID-19
- Caring for a sick person with COVID-19
- Being within 6 feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for about 10 minutes, OR
- Being in direct contact with secretions from a sick person with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.)

QUARANTINE – Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department. More details can be found on CDC website; https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WAS IN CLOSE CONTACT WITH SOMEONE WITH COVID-19 WHILE THEY WERE ILL, BUT I AM NOT SICK?
You should monitor your health for fever, cough and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day you were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19. You should not go to work or school and should avoid public places for 14 days. This is called **home quarantine**. During the 14 days if you remain symptom free you may remove yourself from home quarantine. If you do get sick, follow instructions below.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM A CLOSE CONTACT TO SOMEONE WITH COVID-19 AND GET SICK?
Call your doctor: If you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop symptoms, call your healthcare provider and notify them you have been exposed to COVID-19. You should isolate yourself at home and away from other people. This is called **home isolation**.

If you have any of the following conditions, you may be at increased risk for serious complications:

- age 60 years or older
- are pregnant
- People who have serious chronic medical conditions like heart disease, diabetes, or lung disease

Your healthcare provider can help you decide if you need to be evaluated in person. If you have a medical emergency of any type and need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you may have been exposed to COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive or immediately after they arrive.

STAY HOME EXCEPT TO GET MEDICAL CARE
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
- **People:** 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.
- **Animals:** You should restrict contact with pets and other animals while sick. When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick; if you must care for your pet, 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 DOCTOR
If you have a medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them if you are ill with, or have been exposed to, COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.

WEAR A FACEMASK
You should wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets and before you enter a healthcare provider's office. If you are not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live with you should not be in the same room with you, or they should wear a facemask if they enter your room.

COVER YOUR COUGHS AND SNEEZES
Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can; immediately clean your hands as described below.

CLEAN YOUR HANDS OFTEN
Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60%

alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Soap and water is preferred especially if hands look or feel dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

AVOID SHARING PERSONAL HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

You should not 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.

CLEAN ALL "HIGH-TOUCH" SURFACES EVERY DAY

High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, remote controls, 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 the facility. These steps will help the healthcare provider's office to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected or exposed.

If you have a medical emergency and call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that you have, or may have COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

See additional guidance for what to do if you set sick at: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html

DISCONTINUING HOME ISOLATION (If you DID get sick)

People with symptoms of COVID-19 who were exposed to someone with a lab-confirmed case who have stayed home (home isolated) can stop home isolation under the following conditions:

1. You have had no fever for at least 24 hours (that is one full day of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers) **AND**
2. All other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved) **AND**
3. At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared

Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation

Most people do not require testing to decide when they can once again be around others; however, if your healthcare provider recommends testing, they will let you know when you can resume being around others based on your test results.

Note that these recommendations do not apply to persons with severe COVID-19 or with severely weakened immune systems (immunocompromised). These persons should follow the guidance below for "I was severely ill with COVID-19 or have a severely weakened immune system (immunocompromised) due to a health condition or medication. When can I be around others?" found here https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/end-home-isolation.html?deliveryName=USCDC_2067-DM33441

More information on discontinuing home isolation is available here:
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html
In all cases, **follow the guidance of your healthcare provider and local health department.**
The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with your healthcare provider and state and local health departments. Local decisions depend on local circumstances.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:
Find us on Facebook @StJosephHealthDepartment

City of St. Joseph website
https://www.stjoemo.info/912/COVID-19-Coronavirus

MODHSS website
https://health.mo.gov/living/healthcondiseases/communicable/novel-coronavirus/

Missouri DHSS COVID-19 Hotline 1-877-435-8411

CDC website
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/