

## What to do if you were potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19.

### Introduction

If you have been exposed to COVID-19, or think you have been exposed, you can help prevent the spread of the virus to others in your home and community. Please follow the guidance below. Symptoms of COVID-19 Common symptoms are fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

Other symptoms may include: chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, fatigue, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell

### How do I know if I've been exposed to COVID-19?

The virus that causes COVID-19 most commonly spreads between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet, or 2 arm lengths). An infected person can spread the virus through respiratory droplets or small particles, such as those in aerosols. People most often get exposed by a household member or through close contact with another person. Close contact means that you have been within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period of time. Some people get COVID-19 without knowing how they were exposed.

### Participate in a public health interview

If someone with COVID-19 tells public health they have recently been in close contact with you, you may hear from us by text or phone call. An interviewer will help you understand what to do and what support is available. The interviewer will not tell you who gave them your name. If you later become ill, they will ask you for the names and contact information of people you were recently in close contact with to notify them about exposure. They will not share your name when they reach out to them.

### I had close contact with someone who tested positive COVID-19 but I am not sick. What should I do?

You should quarantine at home and away from others (self-quarantine). Current quarantine recommendations are to stay in quarantine for 14 days after your last contact. This is the safest option. Monitor your symptoms during this time, and if you have any COVID-19 symptoms during the 14 days, get tested.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently announced new guidance that fully vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria:

1. Are fully vaccinated (had both doses, and at least two weeks have passed since the second dose).
2. Received last dose within three months.
3. Have not had symptoms since current COVID-19 exposure.

Fully vaccinated persons should still watch for symptoms for 14 days after their exposure. They should also continue to wear masks, practice social distancing, keep their social circles small, and be tested 3-5 days following their most recent exposure. An exception to the guidance is that vaccinated inpatients and residents in healthcare settings should continue to quarantine following an exposure to someone with COVID-19. Persons who do not meet all three criteria should continue to follow current quarantine guidance after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.

## **I had close contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19 and now I'm sick. What should I do?**

If you were exposed to COVID-19 and get symptoms, you should stay home and away from other people including household members and animals in your home (self-isolate), even if you have very mild symptoms. Contact your health care provider or local health jurisdiction for a test. Tell them you were exposed to someone with COVID-19 and are now sick.

### **Monitor your symptoms**

Get medical help right away if your symptoms get worse. Before you get care, call your health care provider and tell them that you have COVID-19 symptoms. Put on a face covering before you enter the healthcare facility to protect others in the waiting room and exam rooms. If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, tell the dispatch staff that you have COVID-19 symptoms. If possible, put on a face covering before emergency services arrive.

## **What should I do to keep my illness from spreading to my family and other people in the community?**

- Stay home, except to get medical care.
  - Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
- Avoid using public transportation, taxis, or ride sharing.
- Ask others to do your shopping or use a grocery delivery service.
- Call before you go to a healthcare provider and tell them you have COVID-19 or are being evaluated for COVID-19.
  - Put on a face covering before you enter the building. These steps will help keep people in the office or waiting room from getting sick.
- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home.
- As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people.
  - Use a separate bathroom, if available. Wear a cloth face covering when you are around others. A cloth face covering is anything that completely covers your mouth and nose, and fits securely on the sides of your face and under your chin. It should be made of two or more layers of tightly woven fabric with ties or straps that go around your head or behind your ears. In addition, DOH does not recommend the use of masks with

exhalation valves or vents, or single layer bandanas and gaiters. It is important to wear a mask in all public settings combined with continued implementation of effective public health measures such as vaccination, physical distancing, hand hygiene, and isolation and quarantine.

- Restrict contact with pets and other animals while sick.
  - When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals. If you must care for your pet, wash your hands before and after you interact with pets and wear a face covering, if possible. See COVID-19 and Animals for more information.
- Don't share personal items with people or pets, including dishes, drinking glasses, cups, utensils, towels, or bedding.
- Maintain 6 feet of physical distance from others at all times, even if using a mask.
- Clean your hands often.
- Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with tissues. Throw away the used tissues and then wash your hands.
- Clean "high-touch" surfaces frequently, including counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe and follow the directions on the label.

Please reach out to our COVID-19 Resource Center at the number below with any additional questions.

(360) 964-1850

Mon-Fri 8:30 AM – 4:00 PM

Email: [Covid19@co.grays-harbor.wa.us](mailto:Covid19@co.grays-harbor.wa.us)

Visit our Website: <http://www.healthygh.org/directory/covid19/>

Visit us on Facebook: [Grays Harbor County Public Health & Social Services Department | Facebook](#)