Go home and limit contact with others

Regardless of why you were tested (symptoms, exposure, etc), you should avoid contact with others. Until you know the outcome of your results, if contagious, you could potentially expose others and spread the virus.

Please read through and carefully follow the guidance provided in this packet.

Please do not leave your home unless absolutely necessary and if you must, follow these important steps:

○ Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face covering to protect others.

○ Call ahead to notify anyone (including medical personnel) you will encounter that you could potentially have COVID-19.

We ask that you contact your primary medical provider’s office with any questions about your health or ongoing medical care.

Do not visit public areas — grocery stores, post-office, parks etc.

It would be best to arrange delivery of any necessary supplies to your home, avoiding direct contact with persons during drop-off.

Avoid public transportation such as buses, taxis, ride shares etc.

When and how will I receive my COVID-19 test results?

COVID-19 tests may be processed at one of several laboratories in the region, with a variety of factors affecting the timing of result availability. Typically you’ll get your results 3-4 days after your testing; in rare circumstances, it can take longer.

Good news — you don’t need to wait for a call from a MercyOne team member to learn the result of your COVID-19 test. To get your test to you as quickly as possible, we’ll make it available on the MercyOne patient medical record portal (See My Health Record attachment for guidance).

Note: results for minors are not available on the portal. We will phone you with your minor’s results.

Once you obtain your COVID-19 test results from the portal:

● If your test is negative — please use the guidance in this document to take proper precautions, including when to resume work and other activities.

● If your result is positive — the department of public health will contact you with additional instructions regarding isolation, precautions and your health. It’s very important that you stay at home and follow the guidelines in this document until you receive further direction from a member of the public health department.

Separate and isolate yourself from others

● As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people and pets in your home.

● If possible, designate this room as your “sick area” where you will eat and sleep away from others in your home.
You should use a separate bathroom if one’s available.

If you feel up to it, clean your own bathroom by yourself to limit exposure to other members of your household.

Do not invite guests or allow visitors to your home.

If you need to be around other people or animals in or outside of the home, wear a cloth face covering over your mouth and nose.

You don’t need to wear the cloth face covering when you are alone.

If you can’t put on a cloth face covering (because of trouble breathing, for example), cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.

Throw used tissues in a lined trash can and immediately wash your hands (see section below for specifics on handwashing).

Don’t place cloth face coverings on children under the age of 2, anyone who has trouble breathing or anyone who’s unable to remove the covering without help.

Try to stay at least 6 feet away from other people — this will help you to protect those around you.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, medical grade facemasks are reserved for healthcare workers and some first responders. You may need to make a cloth face covering using a scarf or bandana.

Clean your hands often

Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, sneezing, or going to the bathroom.

It is also important to wash hands before eating or preparing food.

Use hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.

Soap and water are the best option, especially if your hands are visibly dirty.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Monitor your symptoms

Common symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough and shortness of breath. Other less common but serious symptoms can be a sign that you should seek immediate medical care, including:

- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest.
- New confusion or difficulty arousing from sleep.
- Bluish lips or face.
- Trouble breathing is a more serious symptom that means you should get medical attention.

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

Call 911 if you have a medical emergency. Tell the 911 operator that you have or think you might have COVID-19.

Call ahead before visiting your medical provider

During this unusual time, your medical provider and their team want to help you get the information and care you need to be healthy and safe. Many medical visits for routine care are being postponed or coordinated over the phone or virtually.

If you have a medical appointment that cannot be postponed, call your provider’s office and update them on your situation — they will be happy to work with you to find the answers you need. By calling ahead and communicating with the medical office team, you will be helping to protect them and other patients receiving care in the clinic.

Avoid sharing personal household items

Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels or bedding with other people in your home. Wash these items thoroughly after using them with soap and water or put them in the dishwasher. If you feel up to it, wash your own personal items to avoid exposing other household members.
Clean and disinfect frequently

Clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces in your home including phones, remote controls, countertops, doorknobs, light switches, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards etc.

If you are sharing a bathroom:

- Designate personal cleaning supplies such as tissues, paper towels, and cleaners for your use only.
- Clean the toilet seat, faucet and other frequently touched surfaced after each use.
- Use household cleaners and disinfects, being sure to follow the instructions on the label to ensure safety and effective use of the product.
- Many products recommend keeping the surface wet for several minutes to ensure germs are killed.
- These products may also need to be used with precautions such as wearing gloves, protecting your eyes, and utilizing good ventilation.
- Place disposable gloves and other contaminated items in a lined trash can.
- Use gloves when removing garbage and disposing of trash, being sure to wash hands afterward.

Additional guidance from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC)

- Employers should not require a sick employee to provide a negative COVID-19 test result or healthcare provider’s note to return to work.
- Employees with COVID-19 who have stayed home can stop home isolation and return to work when they have met the criteria in the table at the end of this document.
- CDC offers guidance for all employers with specific criteria for those involved in critical infrastructure and healthcare.

We’ve condensed the CDC’s COVID-19 guidance, but there’s a great deal more information available to make decisions about your health and safety during the pandemic. Please feel free to read these additional COVID-19 resources on the CDC webpage:

- What to Do if You are Sick: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html
When it is safe to be around others?
Isolation and quarantine precautions

You must meet these criteria before you can stop home isolation...

### You tested positive for COVID-19:

**With COVID-19 symptoms:**
- 1. At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed since you’ve had a fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
- 2. You’ve had at least 3 days (72 hours) of continuous improvement in your respiratory symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, etc.) AND
- 3. At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared

**Without COVID–19 symptoms:**
- 1. 10 days have passed since you were tested AND
- 2. You continue to have no symptoms since you were tested. However, if you begin showing symptoms; refer to the box directly above

### You tested negative but had close contact* with a person diagnosed with COVID-19...

**Without COVID–19 symptoms:**
- 14 days have passed since you last had contact with the person diagnosed with COVID-19

**With COVID–19 symptoms:**
- 14 days have passed since you last had contact with the person diagnosed with COVID-19

### You tested negative and had no close contact with a person diagnosed with COVID-19...

**With COVID–19 symptoms:**
- Can go back to daily activities 24 hours after fever and other symptoms are gone

* Close Contact (Exposure): being within 6 feet of a person with confirmed COVID-19 for 15 minutes or longer

** Essential/critical infrastructure workers, such as those working in health care, law enforcement, fire, EMS and 911, call centers, housekeeping, custodial, long-term care and residential support facilities, food and agriculture, critical manufacturing, information technology, transportation, energy and governmental facilities may potentially continue to work with strict precautions after exposure, but will need to contact their employer to explore options. If allowed to return to work, home isolation should be followed as described above, with the exception of leaving the home for work.

The guidance in this document was created using CDC resources and approved by Dr. Sandra Crosara, infectious disease prevention specialist at MercyOne North Iowa Medical Center.