



Instructions for the isolation of a COVID-19 patient and informing exposed persons

The coronavirus (COVID-19) has been classed as a generally hazardous communicable disease. According to the Communicable Diseases Act (1227/2016), the physician in charge of communicable diseases in a public service employment relationship either with the municipality or joint municipal authority for a hospital district may order a person, who has or is justifiably suspected of having a generally hazardous communicable disease or a disease that is justifiably suspected of being generally hazardous, to be isolated. Isolation means isolating a patient suffering from a communicable disease away from healthy people. Isolation can take place at the patient's home or in the hospital, depending on the health condition of the patient. The purpose of this is to avoid further infections. The isolation of a patient with confirmed COVID-19 infection takes seven (7) days from the onset of symptoms or with asymptomatic persons seven (7) days from the date the test was taken. Separate instructions are issued for ending the isolation of patients who are in hospital care.

When you fall ill

- Avoid all contact with other people.
- Do not use shared housing company spaces when you are ill.
- When you feel ill, rest is important. The pharmacies sell medications available without prescription that help relieve a high temperature (fever) and pain.
- Make sure you practice good hand-washing and coughing hygiene.
- Monitor your health and call the medical centre, if necessary. If you have to seek medical advice, please use a face mask that covers the nose and mouth.

When caring for someone who is ill

- If you have a person living at home who is suffering from a respiratory infection, others living in the same home can reduce the risks of them catching the infection by avoiding all close contact with the sick person and by frequently and thoroughly washing and disinfecting their hands.
- Washing hands is also very important particularly when you have been in physical contact with the sick person, spent time with the sick person in the same space, or if you have touched any used tissues or dirty laundry.
- Please monitor the health of the sick person and call the medical centre, if necessary.

The following tips can also reduce the risk of infection at home

- If possible, only one adult should take care of the sick person. Any person belonging to one of the risk groups should not be the primary carer for the sick person.
- If possible, people living in the same household should be in a different room to the person who is ill. If this is not possible, the safe distance of at least two (2) metres from the sick person must be maintained. For example, the sick person should sleep in a separate bed.
- If you belong to one of the risk groups, but you cannot avoid close contact with the sick person, consider using a face mask that covers the nose and mouth.
- Do not accept any guests to your home for the duration of the sickness.
- Make sure you ventilate properly in all shared spaces, for instance, by opening the windows in the toilet, kitchen, and bathroom.
- When holding a sick child, try to avoid the child coughing straight into your face.
- Make sure you adhere to good hand-washing and coughing hygiene. Make sure you have a personal towel for drying your hands.



Cleaning, washing the laundry, and keeping things tidy

- Make sure you throw away all used tissues and other disposable products. Remember to thoroughly wash your hands after touching any used tissues or similar items.
- Any contact surfaces and tables should be cleaned on a daily basis using conventional cleaning solutions.
- All towels and bedclothes, cutlery and crockery used by the sick person do not have to be washed separately.
- Wash bedclothes and towels in the conventional manner. If you have touched dirty laundry, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or hand disinfectant.

Exposed persons are not placed in quarantine, but those infected with the COVID-19 virus are asked to inform exposed persons

Exposure may be considered to be about 15 minutes spent in the same room during the duration of the symptoms of the patient, or 48 hours before the symptoms begin or with an asymptomatic COVID-19 patient two days prior to testing. Exposure can occur even in a shorter period of time. For instance:

- persons living in and visiting the same household
- a group of people travelling together
- passengers on a flight who have sat next to someone who is sick, not behind, in front of or on the other side of the gangway.

Exposed persons are recommended to check their symptoms and to seek a COVID-19 test if any infection symptoms become apparent.

Those living in the same household/family as a person infected with the COVID-19 virus should take a COVID-19 test five (5) days after the beginning of the symptoms of the last person to test positive. The time is calculated from the onset of symptoms or from the date of the asymptomatic test.

It is recommended that workers in the social and health care sector be tested up to five (5) days after the last exposure.

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