

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Most people who get COVID-19 will recover without needing medical care. Below you will find guidance on returning to work and other regular activities after you have been sick or in close contact to someone with COVID-19.

IF YOU HAVE COVID-19 SYMPTOMS OR A POSITIVE TEST

If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you might have it, stay home except to get medical care. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea.

Seek testing for COVID-19 if you have symptoms. Testing is available in Transylvania County from healthcare providers, urgent cares, and chain pharmacies. Locations can be found at: <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/about-covid-19/testing>. (Please note that Transylvania Public Health does not offer COVID-19 testing for the general public.) At-home test kits are available by mail for free from <https://www.covidtests.gov/> and for purchase in local stores.

Avoid contact with other household members and pets. Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom if possible. Wear a well-fitted mask if you must be around others in your home. Don't share personal items like cups and towels. Take steps to improve ventilation if possible. Clean and disinfect surfaces according to CDC guidance at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/disinfecting-your-home.html>.

Most people with mild symptoms can recover at home. Monitor and self-treat symptoms, and seek medical care as needed. Seek emergency medical care immediately if you have persistent chest pain or pressure, trouble breathing, blue lips, or confusion. Call ahead before visiting a healthcare provider in person to notify them that you have (or might have) COVID-19. If you need to call 911 notify the first responders that you have (or might have) COVID-19. If possible, put on a cloth face covering before medical help arrives.

If you had symptoms and a positive COVID-19 test or were not tested, you should:

- **STAY HOME FOR 5 DAYS.** Stay home and away from other people for 5 full days after you first had symptoms (day 0). If fever or symptoms (other than loss of taste or smell) persist beyond day 5, you should stay home until you have not had a fever for 24 hours without any fever reducing medication and your other symptoms have improved.
- **WEAR A MASK FOR 5 MORE DAYS.** You can return to work and other activities, but you should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 5 additional days (days 6-10). Avoid places where you cannot wear a mask (such as restaurants), as well as people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe illness. If you are unable to wear a mask, stay home for the full 10 days.

If you had no symptoms and a positive COVID-19 test result, you should:

- **STAY HOME FOR 5 DAYS.** Stay home and away from other people for 5 full days since your first positive test (day 0). *If you develop symptoms, follow the guidance above.*
- **WEAR A MASK FOR 5 MORE DAYS.** You can return to work and other activities, but you should wear a well-fitting mask around others for 5 additional days (days 6-10). Avoid places where you cannot wear a mask (such as restaurants), as well as people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe illness. If you are unable to wear a mask, stay home for the full 10 days.

If you had symptoms of COVID-19 and a negative COVID-19 test result, you should:

- **STAY HOME WHILE SICK.** You can return to work and other activities when you have not had a fever without fever-reducing medications and have felt well for 24 hours, unless a healthcare provider or other health guidance requires you to continue to stay home longer. *If you had close contact to someone with COVID-19, you must also meet the criteria below before returning to work and other activities.*

FOR HEALTHCARE WORKERS: When you return to work after having symptoms of COVID-19, you must wear a facemask at all times while in the healthcare facility until all symptoms are completely resolved or until 14 days after symptoms first began, whichever is longer. You must also follow strict hand and respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette. You should not care for severely immunocompromised patients (e.g., transplant, hematology-oncology) until 14 days after your symptoms first began. Self-monitor for symptoms and seek re-evaluation from your medical provider if symptoms come back or get worse.