

## TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19?

Similar to influenza, COVID-19 is most often a longer recovery than “a virus”. The typical symptoms are cough, fever and fatigue but you may also have breathlessness, muscle aches, sore throat, headache and loss of sense of smell / taste and diarrhea.

### WHAT YOU NEED TO DO:

- 1) **SELF-ISOLATE.** With symptoms: for 10 days after symptoms started. After that time, you can stop IF you no longer have a fever and symptoms have improved for at least 24 hours. No symptoms: for 10 days from your test date. After hospital/severe illness/ immune compromise (e.g., chemotherapy, untreated HIV infection): for 20 days. After you recover, continue to practice physical distancing and mask wearing.
- 2) **NOTIFY CONTACTS** you had from 48 hours before or when your symptoms started, or your test date (if no symptoms). High Risk: Spent more than 15 minutes together, without physical distancing (at least 2 metres apart or separated by plexiglass) or wearing masks. Low Risk: Spent less than 15 minutes together, physically distanced, with consistent appropriate use of masks (medical or non-medical).
- 3) **PROTECT OTHERS:** **(A)** Wash hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your faces. **(B)** Avoid contact with others. Have your own dedicated space(s). If you have to come into contact with others, wear a mask, gloves and eye protection. Only have visitors who you must see, keep physically distanced, and visits short. **(C)** Avoid sharing (eg. utensils, towels). **(D)** Clean your home with regular cleaners, including frequently touched items (eg. toilets, sink tap handles, etc.) on a daily basis. **(E)** Wash laundry thoroughly. No need to separate, but wear gloves when handling, and clean hands immediately after removing gloves. **(F)** Be careful when touching waste. All waste can go into regular garbage bins. Do not touch used tissues. Clean your hands after emptying the wastebasket.
- 4) **Wait to receive a call from Public Health.** Public Health will contact individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19. Due to high volume of positive results, this may take a couple of days. Should you have any questions, contact your primary care provider.

**AT HOME MONITORING ACTION PLAN:**

<p><b>SYMPTOMS ARE STABLE - OR IMPROVING</b></p>	<p>Typical symptoms are cough, fever and fatigue but you may also have breathlessness, muscle aches, sore throat, headache and loss of sense of smell/taste and diarrhea.</p> <p><b>Rest:</b> Fatigue can be a sign of low oxygen. Avoid triggers that make your heart or breathing rate to go up too much. A <i>pulse oximeter</i> can measure your oxygen levels. If you have been prescribed <i>oxygen</i>, note if the measurement was done while using it. Refer to links on reverse side of page.</p> <p><b>Change Positions:</b> To aid breathing you should <b><u>change positions</u></b> to help move secretions and reduce the mechanical work of breathing as much as possible.</p> <p><b>Hydrate:</b> Drink more fluid than you usually would. Fever, sweating and cough mean you lose more body fluids. The colour and volume of your fluid intake should be similar to when you are not ill. If you are not drinking enough, your urine may get darker.</p>
<p><b>SYMPTOMS ARE WORSE - OR NEW</b></p>	<p><b>Call the clinic if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have new or worse trouble breathing.</li> <li>• Your symptoms are getting worse.</li> <li>• You start getting better then get worse.</li> <li>• You have severe dehydration such as having a very dry mouth, or passing only a little urine, or feeling very light-headed.</li> <li>• If your pulse oximetry reading is less than 93% or lower by more than 3% from the previous day:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Try a different finger to check accuracy.</li> <li>○ Tell someone at home your oxygen level is low.</li> <li>○ Rest and loosen any tight clothing.</li> <li>○ If you have been instructed to use your oxygen, to take any medications or to perform any breathing exercises, do that now.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>SYMPTOMS ARE SEVERE</b></p>	<p><b>Call 911 if:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You have severe trouble breathing or severe chest pain.</li> <li>• You are very confused or not thinking clearly.</li> <li>• You pass out (lose consciousness).</li> </ul>

## **WHAT TO EXPECT:**

*Note: symptoms can appear or change at any time – always consult your primary care provider about your specific case if symptoms are worsening.*

- Day 5-10 of COVID-19 are often the most worrisome time for respiratory complications, particularly for older patients and those with underlying conditions like high blood pressure, obesity or diabetes.
- The best way to monitor your health during this time is to use a pulse oximeter. It is a small device that clips on your finger and measures your blood oxygen levels.
  - \*\* Normal oxygen saturation range is about 96 to 99 percent. Call your doctor if your blood oxygen reading drops to 92 percent or less
  - Talk to your primary care provider about where to access or purchase an oximeter.
- While at home, you can increase the flow of oxygen to your lungs by not resting on your back. Resting on your stomach can open parts of the lungs that are compressed when lying on your back. You can also change to resting on your left side or right side, or sit upright in a chair. Refer to **instructions here**.

### **Day 1-3:**

- Early symptoms of COVID-19 vary widely. It can start with a tickle in your throat, a cough, fever, headache and feeling winded or just a little pressure in your chest
- Sometimes it begins with a bout of diarrhea
- Some people just feel tired and lose their sense of taste and smell
- Many people have several symptoms but no fever
- Some patients with gastrointestinal symptoms go on to develop respiratory symptoms, while others don't

### **Day 4-6**

- Some patients never develop more than mild symptoms, or none at all
- Others begin to feel terrible, with an ever-present fever, aches, chills, cough and an inability to get comfortable
- Some younger patients with mild disease may develop rashes, including itchy red patches, swelling or blistering on the toes or fingers, similar to frostbite

### **Day 7-8**

- For patients with mild illness, the worst is over after a week
- Patients who have felt terrible may get worse. And some patients might start to feel better briefly then take a turn for the worse
- If you have been given a monitor to measure your oxygen level, this can be used as a tool to signal when the patient needs medical attention

### **Day 8-12**

- Monitoring should continue for the second week of illness. Patients may feel better sleeping on their stomachs or sides
- Monitor for worsening symptoms including increasing shortness of breath, worsening cough
- Your home oxygen monitoring monitor can signal if you need additional medical attention

### **Day 13-14**

- Patients who had mild illness should be well recovered
- Patients who had worse symptoms, but maintained normal oxygen levels, should feel mostly recovered after two weeks, although many patients report lingering fatigue and other issues
- Doctors advise a slow return to activity, even if you had mild or moderate illness
- Patients with severe symptoms and those who needed additional treatment because of low oxygen may still feel unwell and fatigued and take far longer to recover

**Do not hesitate to seek medical attention if you feel that your condition is worsening!**

Reference: <http://gbfht.ca/covid-19/covid-19-positive-diagnosis-now-what/>