

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Information for casual contacts of a person confirmed with COVID-19

You may have had limited contact with someone who has been diagnosed with novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

What you need to know

You are considered a **casual contact** as you have been within two metres of someone with COVID-19 for less than 15 minutes **OR** in the same space as the infected person for longer than 15 minutes, but more than two metres away.

You are **unlikely to get infected** just from having been in the same place as the person with the virus. You are considered to be at low risk of catching the virus.

The people most at risk of catching COVID-19 are **close contacts** of the infected person. An example of a close contact is someone who lives in the same household as an infected person, or someone who has been within two metres of an infected person for 15 minutes or more.

While you are **not** considered a close contact, there is a small possibility you may become unwell. In most cases COVID-19 causes mild to moderate symptoms. However, some people do develop pneumonia and severe respiratory illness.

What you need to do

1. Monitor your health closely until 14 days after you were last exposed to the infectious person. Watch for these symptoms:

- Fever, chills or sweats
- New or worsening cough
- Difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Loss of smell
- Signs of a head cold (runny nose, sneezing, post-nasal drip)

2. If you develop symptoms or become unwell, seek medical help, but phone first.

Tell them you are a contact of someone who has COVID-19. You can also free phone Healthline on **0800 358 5453**, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Interpreters are available.

Call an ambulance on 111 if you have difficulty breathing. Tell the phone operator that you have been in contact with someone with COVID-19.

Self-isolate yourself at home. Please keep yourself apart from other people in your household as much as possible, e.g. stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom if available. Use a face mask if you have one (if the mask gets damp or dirty with secretions, it must be changed immediately and should not be reused. Put it in the bin, being careful not to touch the front of the mask). Information on self-isolation is available on-line at moh.govt.nz/covid19

3. Practise good hygiene to protect others

[Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze](#), or you can cough or sneeze into your bent elbow. Throw used tissues into a lined rubbish bin, and immediately [wash your hands](#) with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, making sure you dry them thoroughly. You can also use a hand sanitiser if there is no soap and water available.

Through the day, [wash and dry your hands](#) often and thoroughly. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. [Clean high-touch surfaces](#) like kitchen benches and door handles regularly.

For more information

Visit moh.govt.nz/covid19