Australian Government
Department of Health

Information for people with a suspected case

You have been identified as being at risk of infection with coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and you have now developed symptoms. You must isolate yourself in your home or health care setting until Public Health authorities inform you it is safe for you to return to your usual activities.

This information sheet should be read in conjunction with the 'What you need to know' and 'Isolation guidance' information sheets found at www.health.gov.au/covid19-resources.

What happens now?

Your doctor will arrange for you to be tested for the infection. It may take a few days for the test results to be returned.

If your symptoms are serious you will remain in hospital isolated from other patients to prevent further spread of the virus.

If your doctor says you are well enough to return home while you are waiting for your test results:

- remain in your home and do not attend work or school;
- wash your hands often with soap and water;
- cough and sneeze into your elbow;
- avoid cooking for or caring for other members of your household; and
- wear a mask (provided by your doctor) if close contact with other people is unavoidable.

Public Health officers will make contact with you each day to check on your condition and provide you with a phone number to contact if you have questions.

Your family and other close contacts do not need to remain isolated unless they develop symptoms. If they develop symptoms, they must return home and contact the Public Health Unit.

What happens if my test is negative?

You no longer need to remain in isolation. You may return to normal activities on the advice of Public Health authorities. You should continue to carefully monitor your health for up to 14 days after your last contact with the confirmed case. Report any new or returning symptoms to Public Health in this period. You may be required to be tested again.

What happens if my test is positive?

You must remain in your home or accommodation until Public Health officers advise that it is safe to return to normal activities. This will normally be 1 day after your symptoms end.

If your condition deteriorates, seek medical attention:

- Notify the Public Health officers managing your care by calling the number provided to you
- Follow the direction of the Public Health officers who may advise you to go to a doctor's surgery or a hospital
- Call ahead to a doctor or hospital and inform them that you are a confirmed case of COVID-19
- Put on the mask provided to you if you need to leave the house

- When you arrive at the doctor's surgery or hospital, tell them that you are a confirmed case of COVID-19.

If you are experiencing severe symptoms, such as shortness of breath:

- Call 000 and request an ambulance
- Inform the ambulance officers that you are a confirmed case of COVID-19.

People who you have had contact with including family members and people you live with will need to isolate themselves for 14 days since their last contact with you. More information for close contacts can be found at www.health.gov.au/covid19-resources

How can we help prevent the spread of coronavirus?

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene is the best defence against most viruses. You should:

- wash your hands frequently with soap and water, before and after eating, and after going to the toilet
- cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and use alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- and if unwell, avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 meters from people).

More information

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au

Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.

The phone number of your state or territory public health agency is available at www.health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts

If you have concerns about your health, speak to your doctor.