



## COVID-19: Instructions on Isolation

### What to do if you have an acute illness, which may have been caused by new coronavirus

**Valid from: 11.05.2020**

**You are experiencing symptoms of an acute respiratory illness<sup>1</sup> or have suddenly lost your sense of smell and/or taste, which may be caused by the new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2). You must isolate at home immediately to avoid infecting other people. You should also get tested.**

The test result will determine how long you have to stay in isolation (see 'End of the isolation period at home'). If you test positive for COVID-19, the competent cantonal service will contact you and give you further information and instructions.

The following instructions explain what measures you should take to avoid transmitting the virus. You can find comprehensive information about new coronavirus at <http://www.bag.admin.ch/novel-coronavirus>. Furthermore, an explanatory [video](#) on isolation is available at [www.bag-coronavirus.ch](http://www.bag-coronavirus.ch).

#### Monitor your health

- Phone a doctor immediately if you are worried about your state of health or if you experience one of the following warning signs:
  - A persistent high temperature lasting several days
  - A persistent feeling of weakness lasting several days
  - Shortness of breath
  - A persistent feeling of pressure or pain in the chest
  - A feeling of confusion, where you have not experienced this before
  - Bluish coloured lips or face

#### If you live alone

- Ask family members, friends or a delivery service to deliver groceries and other essential products such as medicines to your home and to leave them outside your door.

#### If you live with others in the same household

- Stay in your room and keep the door closed. Eat meals by yourself in your room. Air the room regularly.
- Avoid any visits and contacts and only leave the room if absolutely necessary.
- Keep a distance of at least two metres from other people.
- Avoid contact with pets.
- Use your own bathroom. If this is not possible, clean all amenities (shower, toilet, washbasin) after each use with a standard household disinfectant.
- Do not share household items such as crockery, glasses, cups or kitchen utensils with other people. Wash these items after use in the dishwasher or thoroughly by hand, using washing-up liquid.
- Do not share towels or bed linen with other people. Wash your clothes, bed linen and towels regularly in a washing machine.
- Ask family members, friends or a delivery service to deliver groceries and other essential products such as medicines to your home and to leave them outside your door.

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<sup>1</sup> e.g. cough, sore throat, shortness of breath with or without a temperature, feverishness, achiness

## Handwashing<sup>2</sup>

- You and the persons around you must wash hands regularly, for at least 20 seconds with soap and water. If these are not available, clean your hands with hand sanitiser, rubbing the liquid thoroughly into your hands until they are dry. Use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- Always wash your hands before and after preparing food, before and after eating, after going to the toilet and whenever they are visibly dirty.

## Cover your mouth when you cough or sneeze

- Cover your mouth and nose with a paper tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Throw away or wash the material with which you covered your mouth and nose.
- Throw used paper tissues into a separate bin with a plastic rubbish bag in your room.

**If you have to leave the house** (to get tested or for a doctor's appointment):

- **Wear a [face mask](#).** If not available, keep a distance of at least two metres from other people.
- **Avoid public transport.** If you are feeling well enough, drive, cycle, walk or call a taxi.

## How to use a face mask correctly<sup>3</sup>

- Wash your hands with water and soap or use a hand sanitiser before putting on the mask.
- Put the face mask on carefully, ensuring that nose and mouth are covered; secure the mask so that it fits tightly against your face.
- Do not touch the mask once you have put it on. Each time you touch a used mask, e.g. when you remove it, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water or use hand sanitiser.
- A face mask can be used up to 4 hours.
- Do not reuse a disposable face mask.
- Throw away disposable face masks immediately once you remove them.

## Observe all preventive measures

- Dispose of all waste soiled with bodily fluids (faeces, blood, discharge) in a plastic rubbish bag in a separate bin in your room before it is disposed of with other waste.
- Clean and disinfect any surfaces you touch such as bedside tables, bedframes and other bedroom furniture. Do this daily with a standard household disinfectant.
- Clean bath, basin and toilet after use with a standard household disinfectant.

## Advice for parents

- If your child is ill and in isolation, it is a good idea if just one parent looks after the child. Depending on the age of the child, you have to adjust the recommended measures on isolation and wearing a mask individually.

## Social contact during the isolation period

- Even if you have to isolate, this does not mean that you have to break off all social contact. Stay in touch with friends and family via telephone, Skype etc. Tell them about what you are experiencing, and about your thoughts and feelings.
- If this is not possible, or if you still feel anxious about the situation, call the number 143 ('Die Dargebotene Hand') to talk to someone about your problems. This number is operated 24/7 and calls are free of charge.
- You can find more information online at <http://www.dureschnufe.ch>.

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<sup>2</sup> Video: How to wash hands properly: <https://youtu.be/gw2Ztu0H0YY>

<sup>3</sup> Video: How to use a face mask correctly: <https://youtu.be/GNkQKutS8cg>

### **End of the isolation period at home**

- You have tested positive: The competent cantonal service will contact you and give you further information. Usually you may discontinue isolation 48 hours the symptoms subsided, provided at least ten days have passed since the first symptoms appeared.
- You have tested negative: You may discontinue isolation 24 hours after showing no further symptoms.
- You have **not been tested**: You may discontinue isolation 48 hours after the symptoms subsided, provided at least ten days have passed since the first symptoms appeared.
- If you suddenly lost your sense of smell and/or taste, it may take longer for them to return. Therefore, if this is the only symptom you still have after ten days, you may discontinue isolation.

### **After the isolation period**

- Continue to observe the rules on hygiene and social distancing in the 'Protect yourself and others' campaign: [www.bag.admin.ch/protect-yourself-and-others](http://www.bag.admin.ch/protect-yourself-and-others).

### **What should your family and people you have had close contact with do?**

- Until a test result is available, they should monitor their health and observe the rules on hygiene and social distancing in the 'Protect yourself and others' campaign: [www.bag.admin.ch/protect-yourself-and-others](http://www.bag.admin.ch/protect-yourself-and-others). If they start showing symptoms, they should isolate, do the [coronavirus check](#) on the FOPH website and get tested if necessary. They must follow the recommendations on isolation given in this instruction.
- If you test positive for the new coronavirus: the competent cantonal service will help you to identify all the people, who have to quarantine. Persons having to quarantine are the ones you have been in close contact with – that is to say, all those who came within two metres of you for more than 15 minutes without any form of protection – during the time you were symptomatic and up to 48 hours before your symptoms appeared. The contacts will receive instructions on how to quarantine.