Instructions: Self-quarantine

What to do when you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for the new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2)

Status: 30.04.2020

If you have had close contact with someone who has been confirmed in a laboratory test to have the new coronavirus – i.e. you live with them in the same household or have an intimate relationship with them – you must confine yourself in quarantine at home for 10 days. This applies if you had contact with this person while they were showing symptoms and/or up to 48 hours beforehand. The cantonal medical officer will probably contact you and give you more information and instructions on what to do.

By putting yourself in self-quarantine, you avoid transmitting the virus to people in your household and to the general public. You could become infectious during this time. By self-quarantining, you are helping to protect people in high-risk groups and to slow down the spread of the new coronavirus.

The following instructions explain what measures you should take while you are in self-quarantine in order to avoid transmitting the virus. Comprehensive information about new coronavirus is published at: http://www.bag.admin.ch/neues-coronavirus.

Social distancing

- Stay at home for 10 days. This period begins from the time the sick person you have had contact with goes into self-isolation.
- Avoid all contact with other people. However, you may have contact with others in your household who are also in quarantine. People in a high-risk group in the same household should remain isolated from the others, if possible.
- Continue to observe the hygiene rules and instructions on how to behave in the ‘Protect yourself and others’ campaign: www.bag-coronavirus.ch.

If you live in the same household as the person who is ill

- Anyone who is ill should stay by themselves in a room and keep the door closed. He/She should eat meals in the room (see instructions on self-isolation).
- Keep a distance of two metres from the person who is ill when they have to leave their room.
- Avoid any visits and contacts.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Do not share household items such as crockery, glasses, cups or kitchen utensils. Wash these items carefully after use in the dishwasher or by hand, using washing-up liquid.
- Do not share towels or bed linen. Wash all clothes, towels and bed linen regularly in the washing machine.
- People in your household who are at high risk should stay separate from all others while being in quarantine, if possible and follow the instructions on self-isolation.

1 People over the age of 65 and those with high blood pressure, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, cancer or who have a disorder or are undergoing treatment which weakens the immune system.
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 but not with the person who has fallen ill

- Stay in your room and keep the door closed. Eat your meals by yourself in your room.
- Avoid all contact with others and only leave your room if necessary.
- Keep a distance of two metres from other people when you have to leave your room.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Use your own bathroom. If this is not possible, clean all amenities (shower, toilet, and washbasin) after each use with a standard household cleaning product.
- Do not share household items such as crockery, glasses, cups or kitchen utensils with other people. Wash these items carefully after use in the dishwasher or 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.

Monitor your health

- Keep an eye on how you are feeling: feeling achy, tired and feverish, a cough, sore throat, headache, shortness of breath or suddenly losing your sense of taste and/or smell are all signs that you may be infected with coronavirus.

If symptoms appear

- Put yourself in self-isolation and follow the instructions for self-isolating in confirmed cases of coronavirus. You will find all the information you need at: www.bag.admin.ch/neues-coronavirus.
- Call your doctor immediately. Tell them that you have been in self-quarantine according to the FOPH instructions and that you are now showing symptoms. Tell your doctor if you belong to a high-risk group.

Social contact during quarantine

- Even if you have to go into quarantine, 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

Handwashing

- You and the people 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 clearly 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.

At the end of self-quarantine

- If you do not have any symptoms after 10 days, you can stop self-quarantine.
- Continue to follow the rules on hygiene and how to behave in the ‘Protect yourself and others’ campaign: https://foph-coronavirus.ch/
- Continue to monitor your health. First symptoms may appear still appear after the end of the quarantine.

---

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