Instructions for Healthcare Workers who are Close Contacts or Household Members to a COVID-19 Case

You will need to inform your employer about your close contact to a lab-confirmed COVID-19 case. If you are asymptomatic, your employer will decide, based on staffing needs, if you need to report to work. If you are instructed to return to work, you will need to monitor your symptoms closely. If you do not return to work, you should remain in quarantine at home for 14 days from the time of your last exposure to COVID-19. Below is some general guidance to help protect the patients you serve.

1. If you develop any signs of potential illness, you should stay home and self-isolate. Fever, cough, or shortness of breath are the most common symptoms of COVID-19, but unusual fatigue, body aches, nausea, new loss of taste or smell, headache, sore throat, runny nose and nasal congestion, vomiting or diarrhea are all symptoms that should prompt you to stay home.

2. If advised to continue working by your employer, wear a mask at work, closely monitor your symptoms and take your temperature before the start of every shift, or more frequently. Your employer may actively monitor your temperature and symptoms.

   - In addition, if you work with high-risk patients (such as patients who are immune compromised, on chemotherapy, receive dialysis, live in a long-term care facility, etc.):

      ○ Your employer should consider reassigning you to a different patient care area or to perform non-patient care or administrative duties during the quarantine period.

      ○ You or your employer should consider monitoring your temperature and symptoms several times during your shift.

3. If you develop a fever or any symptoms while at work, inform your employer and immediately go home to self-isolate. Fever, cough, or shortness of breath are the most common symptoms of COVID-19, but unusual fatigue, body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, nausea, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea are all symptoms that should prompt you to go home.
4. Do not leave your home during the quarantine period except to report to work, if you have been instructed to do so, or to perform essential errands when absolutely necessary (e.g. going to the pharmacy). As much as possible, please plan to use family members or friends for your essential errands. Maintain six feet of distance between yourself and others as much as possible.

5. Do not invite visitors into your home for the duration of the quarantine period.

6. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after coughing, sneezing, or blowing your nose, after going to the bathroom, or after contact with moist materials such as tissue, diapers, or used masks. A hand sanitizer with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as active ingredients can also be used instead of soap and water if the hands are not visibly dirty.

7. Cover your mouth and nose with the crook of your elbow or a tissue when you sneeze or cough. Put tissues in the garbage and wash your hands immediately with soap and water or use hand sanitizer with greater than 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol as active ingredients.

8. Do not share toothbrushes, drinks or eating utensils.

9. Refrain from kissing anyone in or near the mouth.

10. If you do not develop symptoms during the 14 days since your last exposure to COVID-19, you may be released from quarantine after 14 days.

Deciding when the 14-day quarantine period is over is more complicated if you live with a person who has COVID-19 and you cannot completely separate yourself from this household or family member. Your 14-day quarantine will not start until all household members who become sick no longer need to be isolated. All household members who are diagnosed with COVID-19 or have symptoms concerning for COVID-19 should stay isolated at home:

- For at least 10 days after symptoms begin
- If symptoms are still present at 10 days, isolation should continue until 24 hours after fever has resolved (without using a fever-reducing medication like Tylenol or ibuprofen) AND symptoms like cough, body aches, sore throat, have improved.
- **If you have not yet developed symptoms**, your 14-day quarantine period will begin once all household members no longer need to be isolated.
• If you start to feel sick, please contact your employer and your healthcare provider and let them know you are a contact to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 and a healthcare worker.

  • If you develop symptoms and are unable to get testing right away through your employer or healthcare provider, you may call Contra Costa Public Health at 925-570-0978 8:30am-3:30pm daily for screening and potential testing.

If you are diagnosed with COVID-19, you will have to isolate at home for 10 days or for 24 hours after your symptoms resolve (fever has gone away without using a fever-reducing medication like Tylenol or ibuprofen AND your symptoms like cough, body aches, sore throat, have improved), whichever is longer. It is also recommended that you wear a mask until all symptoms resolve or until 14 days after illness onset, whichever is longer, and do not come in contact with severely immunocompromised patients until after 14 days after illness onset.

If you were tested and found to be positive for COVID-19, but did not have any symptoms at the time of testing:

  • You should remain in isolation for 10 days from the date the test was performed.

    o During this time, you should also monitor yourself for symptoms. If any symptoms develop during this time, you should remain in isolation as noted above.

If you stayed in the hospital in the intensive care unit because of your COVID-19 symptoms:

  • You will need to be in isolation for at least 20 days after your symptoms began with improving symptoms for at least 24 hours. If you left the hospital and it has not been at least 20 days, you will need to remain at home (in self-isolation) for 20 days after your symptoms began.

  • If you still have cough and fever after 20 days, continue to stay home until 24 hours after:

    o the fever has gone away (without using a fever-reducing medication like Tylenol or ibuprofen) AND

    o your symptoms, such as cough, body aches, sore throat, have improved.

After this time, you will no longer need to be isolated.
If you have any or have any concerns or questions, please call Public Health during normal business hours Monday-Friday 8:00AM-5:00PM at 925-313-6740 or email us at CoCoHelp@cchealth.org. You can also find more information online at cchealth.org/coronavirus.