

# Coronavirus (COVID-19): I've been advised to isolate myself: what does this mean?



## What is COVID-19?

- COVID-19 is a respiratory illness similar to flu (cough, fever, fatigue & aching body/muscles). More commonly than flu, it can become severe causing viral pneumonia (difficulty breathing).
- 4 out of 5 people will have a mild illness and recover without treatment. The elderly and those with underlying health conditions have increased risk of severe illness.

## How does it spread?

You can pick up COVID-19 from:

- Touching an infected surface or object. The virus can enter your body when you touch your nose, mouth and eyes.
- Very close contact (1.5 metres) with a person infected with COVID-19.



## Why do I need to isolate myself?

- After being infected with COVID-19, it can take up to 14 days to develop symptoms. During this period and for some time after, the virus may be transmitted to others. Isolating yourself will help to prevent spread to others.
- You should isolate yourself if you have:
  - Symptoms of COVID-19 *or*
  - Had close contact with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 *or*
  - Travelled to ANY international location
- If you are returning home to South Africa, isolate at home for 14 days.
- If you are visiting South Africa:
  - Restrict your isolation to one location.
  - Communicate with your tour-operator to extend your stay in order to isolate for 14 days.
  - Avoid hotels and use self-catering or bed-and-breakfast accommodation instead.

## What should I do if I develop symptoms or my symptoms worsen during isolation?

- Contact your health care provider or phone a hotline number below and follow their advice.
- Rest, drink plenty of fluids and use medications (like paracetamol) as needed to reduce fever or pain.

**If you have difficulty breathing, seek health care urgently.** Call ahead to your doctor or alert health facility as soon as you arrive: tell them about your symptoms and any recent travel/contacts. Expect to put on a mask before you enter the facility.

National Hotline  
0800 029 999

Provincial Hotline  
021 928 4102

National WhatsApp  
060 012 3456

Operating  
24 hours a day

For more information: [www.westerncape.gov.za/coronavirus](http://www.westerncape.gov.za/coronavirus)

## What must I do during isolation?



### Stay home except to get medical care.

Do not go to work, school, church or any other public areas. Avoid using public transport or taxis. Ask others to do errands.



**Cover your mouth and nose** with a tissue or your elbow (not your hands) when coughing/sneezing. Immediately discard used tissues and wash your hands.



**Clean and disinfect** frequently touched objects and surfaces (phones, counters, bedside table, doorknobs, bathroom surfaces).

### Avoid contact with other people and pets as much as possible.

Do not receive visitors. If living with others, stay in a specific room and use a separate bathroom if possible.

Open windows and doors. If in same room as others, keep at least 1.5 metres apart.



**Avoid sharing** dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding – after using these, wash them well.

**Wash hands often**, especially before handling food/after using toilet or coughing/sneezing. Avoid touching face, eyes, nose or mouth.



If you have or develop symptoms of COVID-19, **wear a face mask** when in contact with others.



## Wash your hands well

- Use these steps to wash your hands for at least 20 seconds. If no soap and water available, use hand sanitiser instead.
- Roll up your sleeves, rinse hands in clean water and apply soap to palm of hand:



1 Rub palms together.



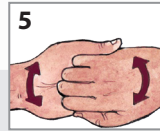
2 Rub tips of nails against palm. Swap hands.



3 Rub fingers between each other.



4 Place one hand over back of other, rub between fingers. Swap hands.



5 Grip fingers and rub together.



6 Rub each thumb with opposite palm. Swap hands.

- Rinse your hands with clean water and dry on paper towel or allow to dry on their own.

## When can I stop isolation?

- Isolate yourself for 14 days.
- Only stop in consultation with a hotline or health care provider.