



# COVID-19 Toolkit for your business

# Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)

COVID-19 is spread by close person-to-person contact from droplets from a cough or sneeze, which can get into your mouth, nose, or lungs. Close contact is defined as being within approximately 6 feet of another person.

People with COVID-19 who do eventually develop symptoms can transmit the virus to others before showing symptoms. The virus can spread between people who are in close contact with each other, even when someone is not having symptoms. A significant number of people with COVID-19 do not have symptoms.

This is why social distancing is so key in the fight against COVID-19, and why the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends people wear cloth face coverings in public settings where social distancing is hard to do, for example, grocery stores.

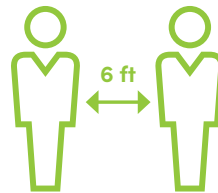
This is especially important in areas where there is significant community-based spread.

## Protect yourself and others



### Universal masking

- Wear cloth mask or face covering in common areas of the facility or if physical distancing is difficult to maintain.
- Make sure the mask covers your mouth and nose.
- Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.



### Practice physical distancing

Make sure you are sitting or standing at least 6 feet away from the person next to you.



### Clean your hands

Every time you cough, sneeze or use a tissue and routinely throughout your visit.

- Use soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer, covering all surfaces of your hands and rub together until they feel dry.
- Dispensers of alcohol-based hand sanitizer are located throughout the facility.



### Cover your cough

- Use a tissue or your sleeve to cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing (and dispose of the tissue right away).
- If you don't have a tissue, sneeze or cough into your upper sleeve instead of your hands.

# For Employers

It's news no employer wants – several employees test positive for COVID-19. During this pandemic, however, it may happen to you.

If your workplace is exposed to COVID-19, consider the following practices:

## Managing Sick Employees

- **Stay home:** Tell employees to stay home if they are feeling sick.
  - **Sick leave:** Consider offering paid sick leave so they don't come to work and spread their illness.
  - **Sick notes:** Don't require sick notes to stay home from work.
  - **Call ahead:** If employees have a cough, shortness of breath or fever of 100 degrees or more, they should call their local clinic or the IDPH COVID-19 Hotline at 211. From there they will be given further directions.
    - Please ask them not to go to the doctor or emergency room before they have called MercyOne and been given further instructions because they could be directed to a different location or asked to stay home
  - **Returning to work:** Consistent with CDC guidelines, MercyOne does not retest patients so their employer can have proof they've recovered from COVID-19 before returning to work. Nor does MercyOne provide return-to-work notes.
- Please tell employees that to return to work, they must be fever-free for 72 hours without fever-reducing medication, it must be 7 days since the onset of symptoms and they must have improvements of symptoms. Recovering COVID-19 patients returning to work should wear cloth masks to protect others from potential shedding of the virus.
- **Proof of doctor's directions - Isolation vs. High Risk:** A new federal program called the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act (EPSLA) provides certain full-time employees up to 2 weeks (80 hours) of leave (less if they are part time workers). Generally, for employees who are on home isolation, per Department of Labor guidelines, the employee would only need the name of their provider to get EPSLA leave. The patient may need a doctor's note or FMLA paperwork completed: if they exceed their allotment of EPSLA leave. They would be out of work for an unforeseeable prolonged period of time due to falling under a high risk group, or they have been mandated to stay home due to federal or state mandate.
  - **Cleaning:** If there are several exposures, consider closing for professional deep cleaning.

# Protecting the workplace

- **Cloth Masks:** Per CDC guidelines, encourage your colleagues to wear cloth masks.
- **Distance:** Maintain at **least 6 feet between employees if possible**. If not, consider using barriers, such as Plexiglas.
- **Virtual work:** Encourage employees to work virtually as much as possible.
- **Wash hands:** Encourage frequent handwashing. Provide hand sanitizer for high traffic areas.
- **Face touching:** Remind employees not to touch their faces.
- **Inform of exposure:** If it's believed an employee has been exposed to COVID-19 or is being tested, inform those who have been in close contact with that employee.
- **Clean:** Frequently clean high-traffic surfaces, such as doorknobs, chairs, tables, and shared equipment such as tools, computers or copy machines.
- **No sharing:** Don't have employees share headsets or other objects near the mouth or nose. Discontinue potlucks. Consider limiting communal items such as coffee pots, refrigerators, drinking fountains, water coolers and vending machines. However, if these items are essential to daily work flow, employees should wash their hands after touching communal surfaces.
- **Shifts:** Consider staggering the times people come to and leave work to allow safe distancing.
- **Breaks:** Encourage employees not to congregate in break rooms and, if possible, to eat lunch at their work stations.
- **Air:** Work with maintenance staff to increase air exchanges in rooms.

Please see the CDC's guidance for businesses and employers or IDPH's Business and Organizations Guidance for additional resources.



# Quick links and overview

## VIRTUAL VISITS

MercyOne is offering virtual visits, please go to [mercyone.org/virtualvisits](https://mercyone.org/virtualvisits) or contact your provider directly to set up a virtual visit. You will need a device with a camera and speaker/microphone.

## HANDWASHING

Guidance on when and how to wash hands properly.

- **CDC**

[www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html](https://www.cdc.gov/handwashing/when-how-handwashing.html)

Other languages available (Spanish)

### Proper hand washing:



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

## HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

Guidance on handwashing, social distancing, cleaning and disinfecting to protect yourself and loved ones from COVID-19.

- **CDC**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html)

Other languages available (Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese)

## SOCIAL DISTANCING

Guidance on social distancing, including why it's important and effective in the fight against COVID-19.

- **CDC**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html)

Other languages available (Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese)

## CLOTH MASKS

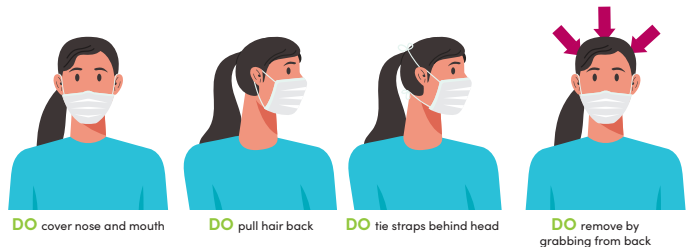
Overview of how to properly wear a cloth mask, guidance on when to wear a cloth mask and tutorials on how to make cloth masks at home.

- **CDC**

[www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html)

Other languages available (Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, Chinese)

## Wearing a Mask: DOs & DON'Ts



# Education

## HOME ISOLATION

- What is Self-Isolation  
[English](#) (Source: IDPH)
- Isolation Guidance for lowans  
[English](#) (Source: IDPH)
- Caring for COVID-19 at Home -  
[Frequently Asked Questions](#)  
(Source: Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security)

## MANAGING SYMPTOMS

- Managing COVID-19 Symptoms at Home  
[English](#) | [Spanish](#) (MercyOne)

## CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

- Everyday Steps, Steps When Someone is Sick, and Considerations for Employers  
[English](#) (Source: IDPH)

## GENERAL

- Addressing Anxiety Regarding COVID-19  
[English](#) (Source: IDPH)
- What to Do if You Are Sick with COVID-19  
[English](#) | [Spanish](#) (Source: CDC)
- COVID-19 Stop the Spread of Germs  
[English](#) | [Spanish](#) (Source: CDC)
- COVID-19 Symptoms  
[English](#) | [Spanish](#) (Source: CDC)
- COVID-19 What You Need to Know  
[English](#) | [Spanish](#) (Source: CDC)
- Important Information About Your Cloth Face Coverings  
[English](#) (Source: CDC)
- How to Protect Yourself and Others  
[English](#) (Source: CDC)
- [FAQs](#)

## WELLNESS

- Coping with Stress  
[English](#) (Source: CDC)
- Helping Children Cope  
[English](#) (Source: CDC)
- Caring for Children  
[English](#) (Source: CDC)
- Talking with children about COVID-19  
[English](#) (Source: CDC)
- [Re-invent your self-care](#)



# Symptoms

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.
- Older adults and people who have severe underlying medical conditions like heart or lung disease or diabetes seem to be at higher risk for developing more serious complications from COVID-19 illness.

## WATCH FOR SYMPTOMS

People with COVID-19 have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness.

Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. People with these symptoms may have COVID-19:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath / difficulty breathing
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Headaches
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

This list is not all possible symptoms. Other less common symptoms have been reported, including gastrointestinal symptoms like nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE COVID-19?

If you feel sick with fever, cough, or difficulty breathing, contact your health care provider.

Don't have a provider?  
Find one near you at [MercyOne.org](https://www.mercyone.org).

Share your symptoms with your provider and let them know if you have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19.

Your provider may refer you to a COVID-19 testing location. MercyOne has dedicated COVID-19 testing sites across Iowa. Find one near you.

## WHEN TO SEEK EMERGENCY MEDICAL ATTENTION

Look for **emergency warning signs\*** for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, **seek emergency medical care immediately**

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

\*This list is not all possible symptoms. Please call your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

**Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility:** Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

# Social distancing

To prevent spread of COVID-19, MercyOne recommends social distancing as outlined by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## SOCIAL DISTANCING IS:

### Limit close contact with people

- Limit physical contact, including handshakes
- Avoid hugging or kissing people who are sick or showing symptoms of illness
- Keep your distance about six feet away
- Limit in-person meetings, using phone, email and other communication tools when possible
- Increase physical space when you are working or talking with others out in public

### Stay home if you are sick

- Stay home from work, school, church or other group gatherings if you are ill with these symptoms:
  - Fever of 100° or higher
  - Cough
  - Shortness of breath
  - Sore throat

### Postpone or cancel events

- Officials may ask you to modify, postpone or cancel large events for the safety and well-being of your event staff, participants and the community.
- If possible, plan alternative ways for participants to enjoy the events virtually.

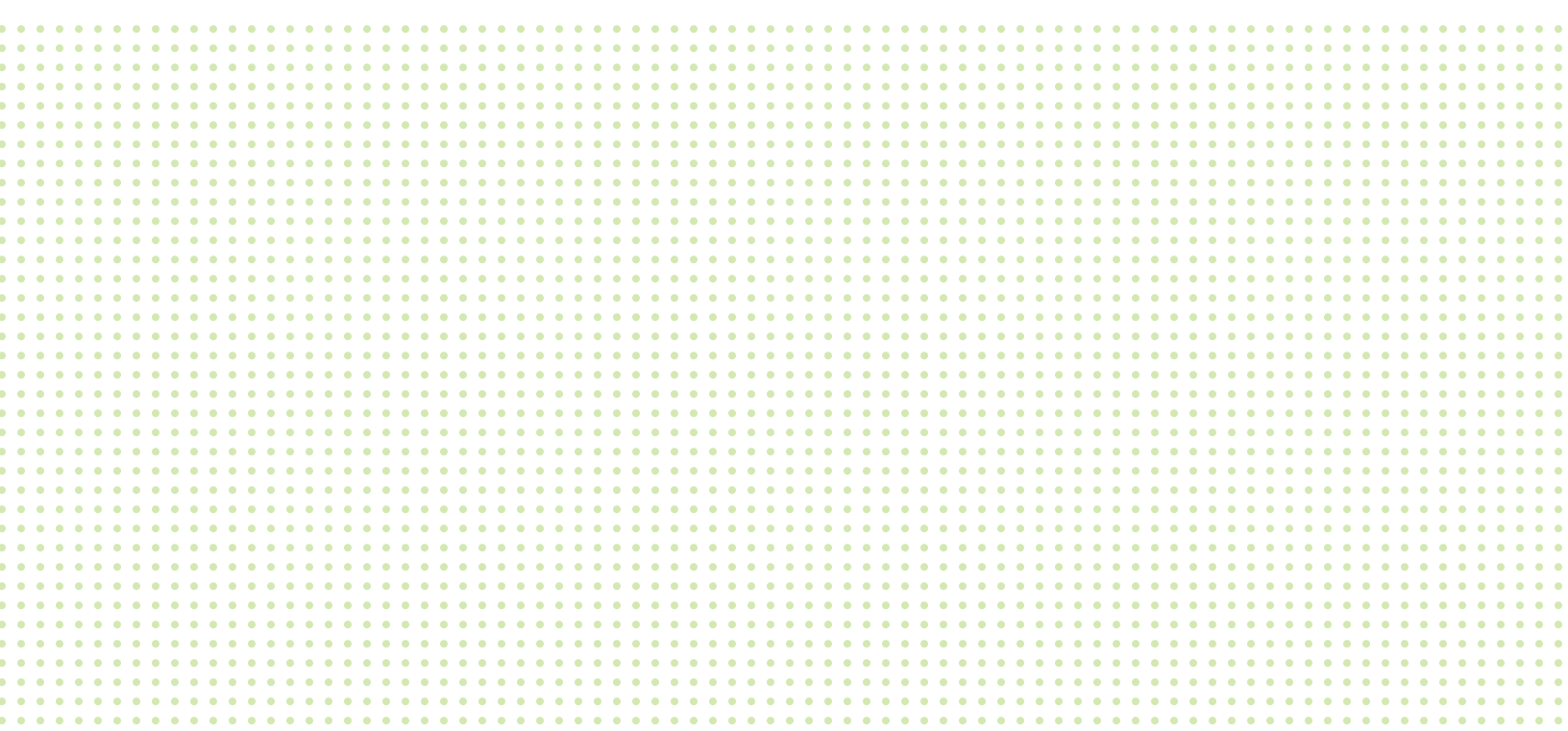
### Avoid crowds, especially in poorly ventilated spaces

- Your risk of exposure to respiratory viruses like COVID-19 may increase in crowded, closed-in settings with little air circulation if there are sick people in the crowd. **Maintain at least a 6 foot distance.**

### Reduce or limit gatherings

- Consider that now may not be the best time for parties or potlucks.
- Visiting friends and family is not recommended.

### Limit non-essential travel





# Cloth masks

Wearing a cloth face mask is encouraged by the CDC as helpful in stopping the spread of COVID-19. Whether you have homemade or purchased masks, daily washing is essential to your safety.

Additionally, cloth masks are most beneficial for lessening mouth-hand contact or to help cover a medical mask to extend the life of disposable masks.

## CLOTH MASKS BEST PRACTICES:

Cloth masks only help if they are carefully put on (**donned**) and taken off (**doffed**.)

- Wash your hands for at **least 20 seconds** with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, every time you touch the mask. This will really help you avoid cross-contamination.
- When you're ready to remove a cloth mask, grab one of the ear or head loops.
- Try to avoid touching the front of the mask. Put it in your laundry to be washed – and then wash your hands.
- Wash your cloth mask after each use, or at least daily.
- Wash in hot water, dry on the hot setting of your dryer.

## TO DON EAR LOOP CLOTH MASK

\*Proper hand hygiene has been conducted before donning on mask

**Step 1:** Hold mask by ear loops

**Step 2:** Slip one loop over ear

**Step 3:** Slip second loop over opposite ear, adjust mask to assure mouth and nose covered.

**Note:** Cloth mask tends to slip less during use/talking if the lower edge of mask is aligned with jaw bone (mandible) rather than down below jaw bone.

## TO DON EAR HEAD LOOP MASK

**Step 1:** Hold mask by grasping both head loops at edges of mask

**Step 2:** Hold mask with mask facing downward, so mask is donned with chin directed into mask first. **Step 3:** Stretch both head loops up over crown head, and adjust loops so mask fits snugly.

### When Removing Either Mask for Re-use:

1. Remove mask by grasping ear loops or head loops; avoid touching front of mask.
2. Place mask with outer side facing down on a clean paper towel.
3. If a common area is used for securing masks between uses, write your initials or name on paper towel to designate each person's mask.
4. Perform hand hygiene after removing.
  - a. When re-donning, use care not to touch outside of mask.
  - b. Perform hand hygiene after donning.

## WASH CLOTH MASKS AFTER USE

If you wear your mask to work, place it in a plastic bag and take it home to launder. Store clean masks in paper bags.

### Wash in regular home laundry:

- Recommended is to wash in hot water and dry OR
- Wash in cool or warm water but dry in a hot dryer
- Wash mask after each use (or daily)

### How to Safely Wear and Take Off a Cloth Face Covering

[English](#) (Source: CDC)

### Important Information About Your Cloth Face Coverings

[English](#) (Source: CDC)

# Hand hygiene

Handwashing is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and stop the spread of germs.

There is a right way to wash your hands. When you fail to wash your hands, wash them incorrectly or don't wash for the recommended 20 seconds, you are essentially just spreading the germs around on your hands and then to anything you touch afterwards.

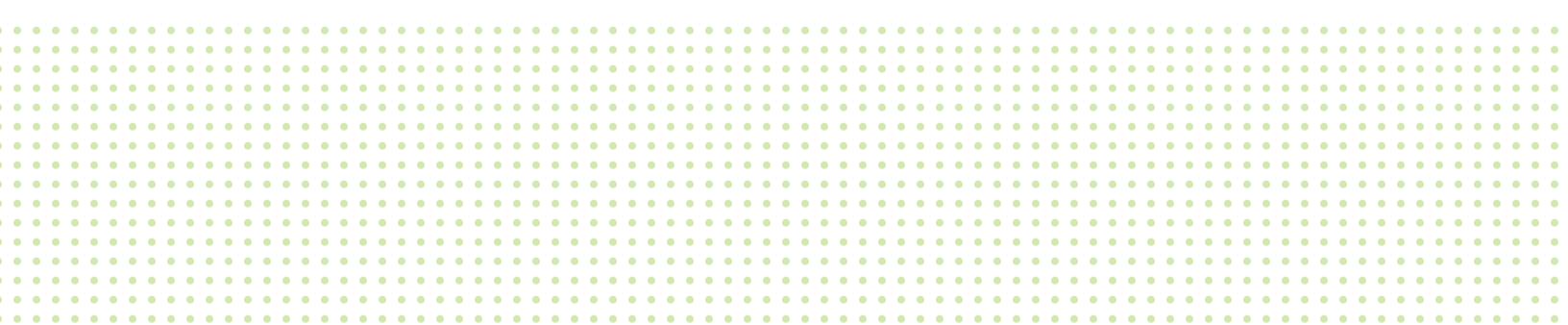
## HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS CORRECTLY:

- Turn on the faucet to warm water and get your hands wet.
- Turn the water off and put on soap.
- Once you have your soap, create a good lather without water for at least 20 seconds. This is often the step people skip -- they wash their hands with the soap under the water when you should be lathering your hands outside of the water first.
- When lathering your hands, scrub the backs, fronts, between the fingers and under your nails. A good song to think of when trying to gauge 20 seconds is "Happy Birthday." Sing this twice through and you should be close to 20 seconds.
- Turn the water back on and put your hands back under the water to rinse off the soap.
- The final step is BEFORE you turn off the faucet grab your paper towel and dry your hands completely. If there are no paper towels then dry your hands with the air dryer. You will then use the paper towel to shut off the faucet and open the bathroom door to exit before throwing your paper towel in the trash.

- If you don't have a paper towel try to use your sleeve to open the door to prevent any germs that may be on the bathroom door handle from getting back onto your hands.
- In the event handwashing isn't a possibility you can use hand sanitizer but this should NEVER be used to replace good handwashing practices. When using hand sanitizer it should be comprised of at least 60% alcohol; rub in the hand sanitizer until your hands are dry.

## You should wash your hands often, including:

- Before, during and after food preparation
- Before eating
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after performing first aid, such as bandaging a cut
- After using the toilet, changing diapers or assisting a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, animal waste or handling their food or treats
- Anytime your hands are physically dirty
- After touching garbage



# How to properly wash your hands

**Soap + Warm Water + 20 seconds**  
is all you need!



**Simple. Effective.**  
**Wash your hands.**

Soap and water are all you need.

