

Novel coronavirus confirmed case

What you need to know

You have been identified as having the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV). You must isolate yourself in your home, hotel or health care setting until Public Health authorities inform you it is safe for you to return to your usual activities.

Please read this information carefully.

What is novel coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a type of virus that can affect humans and animals. An outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) was detected in Wuhan, China in late December 2019. Cases have been reported predominantly in mainland China, as well as other countries, including confirmed cases in Victoria. This virus can cause a severe respiratory illness.

What is a confirmed case?

A confirmed case is someone who has been tested for the novel coronavirus and the result was positive for the virus. **This means that you have been infected with novel coronavirus and there is a risk that you could spread the virus to other people.** As such, it is very important that you follow the recommendations outlined in this fact sheet.

What do I need to do?

Stay at home or in your hotel room

- Isolate yourself at home or in your hotel room until you are advised by a Public Health Officer that you can return to your usual activities.
 - **You must not leave your house or hotel room except to seek medical attention.**
 - You should stay in a different room to other people as much as possible. Use a separate bathroom if available.
 - Wear a surgical face mask when you are in the same room as another person and when seeking medical care.
 - Do not go to work, school, university, work or attend public places or events. Do not use public transport or taxi services.
- Where possible, get others such as friends or family, who are not required to be isolated, to get food or other necessities for you.
- If you have difficulties getting food or necessities, call 1800 675 398 for support.
- If you need a translator first call 131 450, then request the hotline on 1800 675 398. More information is available on our website: dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus

Going outside

If you live in a private house, then it is safe for you to go outside into your garden, balcony or courtyard.

If you live in an apartment it is also safe for you to go outside into the garden while wearing a surgical mask. You should, however, go quickly through any common areas on the way to the garden. Wear a surgical mask if you have to move through these areas.

Monitor your symptoms

If your illness gets worse, you should call the doctor who cared for you or the emergency department where you were assessed. If it is a medical emergency (for example, shortness of breath at rest or difficulty breathing) you should:

- Call 000 and request an ambulance
- Inform the ambulance officers that you have novel coronavirus.

Your doctor or treating medical team will contact you daily to ask about your symptoms.

How can I prevent the spread of the virus to others?

Separate yourself from others

If you share a house with others, you should stay in a different room as much as possible. Wear a surgical mask when you are in the same room as another person. Use a separate bathroom if available. Avoid shared or communal areas.

Make sure you do not share a room with people who are at risk of severe disease, such as elderly people, those who have heart, lung or kidney conditions or diabetes.

Visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home should not visit while you are in isolation.

Wash your hands and cover your coughs and sneezes

You should wash your hands regularly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use an alcohol-base hand sanitiser if your hands are not visibly dirty. Wash your hands or use a hand sanitiser before entering an area or touching items shared with others.

You should cover your coughs and sneezes with either a tissue or your elbow. Dispose of tissue into a waste bin and make sure you wash your hands afterwards.

Avoid sharing household items

You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels bedding or other items with people in your house. After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with detergent and water. A dishwasher may be used to wash crockery and utensils. Use the hottest settings possible.

Regularly clean household surfaces

Surfaces in shared areas should be cleaned daily with a household disinfectant or diluted bleach solution. Clean all frequently touched surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, body fluids and/or secretions or excretions on them.

Read labels of cleaning products and follow recommendations on product labels. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves or aprons and making sure the areas is well ventilated when using the product.

Use a household disinfectant or a diluted bleach solution on hard surfaces. To make a bleach solution at home, add 1 tablespoon of bleach to 4 cups of water.

Wash laundry thoroughly

Immediately remove and wash clothes or bedding that have blood, body fluids and/or secretions or excretions on them.

Wear a surgical mask and disposable gloves while handling soiled items. Wash your hands immediately after removing gloves.

Read and follow directions on labels of laundry or clothing items and detergent. In general, wash and dry with the hottest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.

Disposing of contaminated items

Place all disposable gloves, face masks, and other contaminated items in a lined waste bin before disposing of them with other household waste. Wash your hands immediately after handling these items.

When will I be able to come out of isolation?

This will depend on a number of factors including when your symptoms cease and how well you are feeling. You may need to have further specimens collected, such as nose and throat swabs, to determine that you are no longer infectious.

A Public Health Officer will advise you of these requirements and when your isolation has finished. **You must not cease your isolation until you have been advised by the Public Health Officer that you can leave.**

If your employer, school or university requires confirmation that you are no-longer infectious, please contact the department on 1300 651 160.

Looking after your well-being during isolation

Being confined to home for an extended period of time can cause stress and conflict. Tips for looking after yourself include:

- Talk to the other members of the family about the infection. Understanding novel coronavirus will reduce anxiety.
- Reassure young children using age-appropriate language.
- Think about how you have coped with difficult situations in the past and reassure yourself that you will cope with this situation too. Remember that self-isolation won't last for long.
- Exercise regularly. Options could include exercise DVDs, dancing, floor exercises, yoga, walking around the backyard or using home exercise equipment, such as a stationary bicycle, if you have it. Exercise is a proven treatment for stress and depression.
- Keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media.
- Keep up a normal daily routine as much as possible.
- Arrange with your employer to work from home, if possible.
- Ask your child's school to supply assignments, work sheets and homework by post or email, or if the student can join the class using online options.
- Don't rely too heavily on the television and technology. Treat self-isolation as an opportunity to do some of those things you never usually have time for, such as board games, craft, drawing and reading.
- If you are struggling to cope you call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Beyond Blue on 1300 22 4636.

Information for caregivers and household members of a confirmed case of novel coronavirus

There should only be people in the home who are essential for providing care for the person, or who cannot find alternative accommodation.

Monitor for symptoms

If you are a caregiver or household member you should monitor yourself for symptoms of novel coronavirus. These include fever or cough or shortness. Other early signs and symptoms of infection can include chills, body aches, sore throat, headache, runny nose, muscle pain or diarrhoea.

If you develop any of the symptoms listed above:

- Call a doctor or a hospital and inform them that you are a contact of a confirmed case of novel coronavirus.
- Put on a mask if you have one.
- Keep yourself away from others (for example, in a different room).
- Do not travel on public transport and do not attend any public places.
- When you arrive at the doctor's surgery or hospital, tell them again that you are a contact of a confirmed case of novel coronavirus.

If you are experiencing severe symptoms, such as shortness of breath:

- Call 000 and request an ambulance
- Inform the ambulance officers that you have been in contact with someone with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus.

Wash your hands

Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser if your hands are not visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

Wear a surgical face mask

Wear a surgical face mask and disposable gloves when you are in the same room as the person with confirmed or suspected infection, or when you touch or have contact with the person's blood, body fluids and/or secretions, such as sweat, saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine, or diarrhoea.

- Throw out disposable facemasks and disposable gloves directly into a bin after use.
- Wash your hands immediately after removing the face mask and gloves.

Where can I find out more information?

Call the Department of Health and Human Services on to discuss any questions you have. If you need a translator first call 131 450, then request the hotline on 1300 651 160.

For Victorian updates to the current incident, go to: <https://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/novelcoronavirus>

For national updates: <https://www.health.gov.au/news/latest-information-about-novel-coronavirus>

For international updates: <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/emergencies/novel-coronavirus>

WHO resources <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone 1300 651 160, using the National Relay Service 131 450 if required, or email [Public Health branch](mailto:public.health@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <public.health@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

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