

## Precautions when Directly Caring for a Person at Home with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19



This information will help you understand the precautions you need to take, to provide care safely at home. Your physician and care team will provide more information about caregiving.

### Monitor for Signs of COVID-19

- Everyone in the household is considered a 'close contact' and needs to self-isolate.
- Pay attention to your health each day and record your temperature and any COVID-19 symptoms.
- After your last contact with the ill person, self-isolate for 14 days.
- See *Island Health COVID-19 Information* and *Island Health COVID-19 Symptoms Testing and Isolation* [Resources](#) listed on page 2 of this document.



### Limit those Providing Direct Care

- Keep the direct caregivers for the ill person to the fewest number needed to manage care, but have enough caregivers involved to maintain your well-being.
- Anyone with chronic medical conditions (such as diabetes, lung problems, heart disease or weak immune system) should provide *emotional* support rather than direct care, at physical distance (2 arm's length apart).
- Community Health Services (CHS) can arrange for help with bathing and personal care, if needed.



### Direct Caregivers Who Do Not Live in the Home

If you are a direct caregiver who does not live in the home:

- Travel directly from the ill person's home to yours.
- When returning home remove your shoes, change and wash your clothes, and wash your hands.
- After your last contact with the ill person, self-isolate for 14 days.
- See *Island Health COVID-19 Information* and *Island Health COVID-19 Symptoms Testing and Isolation* [Resources](#) listed on page 2 of this document.



### Wash your hands often

- Clean your hands with soap and water immediately after providing care, cleaning, and removing gloves.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds after each time you provide direct personal care to the ill person.
- If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based sanitizer.



## Wear a Mask, Eye Protection and Gloves

- When providing direct care (touching, feeding, turning or helping with toileting), wear a mask and eye protection.
- Wear gloves when you touch the ill person's bodily fluids (i.e., blood, sweat, saliva, vomit, urine and/or feces) or any clothing/linens containing these fluids.
- CHS will bring eye protection, masks and gloves for the caregivers who provide direct care. The nurses will teach you how to put on, take off and dispose safely of the mask, eye protection and gloves.



## Avoid Sharing Household Items

- Do not use the same dishes, bedding and other items that the ill person uses.
- Wash items used by the ill person with soap or detergent and hot water.
- Don't share cigarettes or other items that you put in your mouth, with the ill person.



## Clean Household Items

- Clean items that are often touched such as toilets, taps, doorknobs and bedside tables, once or twice a day with regular household cleaners.
- See *BCCDC Cleaning and Disinfecting Resource* listed on page 2 of this document.



## Laundry

- Wear gloves and a mask when handling laundry.
- Place soiled laundry in a laundry basket with a plastic liner; do not shake dirty items, instead place gently into the washing machine.
- If you are a caregiver providing direct care, you should wash your clothes daily.
- Wash items with regular laundry detergent and hot water (60-90°C).



## Limit People Coming Into Your Home

- It is okay for people to drop off food or other necessities, but ask them to drop them off outside your home.
- Visit by phone or video, or outdoors at physical distance (2 arm's length apart).
- If visiting in person is important, ask them to use their own masks, keep physically distanced from others, and to wash their hands before and after visiting.
- Visitors need to know that by visiting the ill person, they are at risk of infection.
- Masks and eye protection from CHS are limited to direct caregivers.

## Resources

- Island Health COVID-19 Information: <https://www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/covid-19>
- Island Health COVID-19 Symptoms, Testing and Isolation : <https://www.islandhealth.ca/learn-about-health/covid-19/symptoms-testing-and-isolation>
- BCCDC Cleaning and disinfecting <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks/cleaning-and-disinfecting>

