

May 6, 2020

Quarantine Guidance: What to do if you were exposed to someone with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

COVID-19 is a respiratory disease caused by a new virus called SARS-CoV-2. The most common symptoms of the disease are fever, cough, and shortness of breath. Most people with COVID-19 will have mild disease, but some people will get sicker and may need to be hospitalized. If you have contracted the virus, symptoms may develop within 2 to 14 days from exposure. Unless precautions are taken, your health is at risk, and other people may possibly contract this disease from you.

You may receive a text message or call from the Georgia Department of Public Health because we were notified by a person with COVID-19 that you were in contact with them while they were sick. In order to prevent the spread of disease and advise you if you do develop symptoms of COVID-19, please complete the intake form sent to you to enroll in symptom monitoring. If the Georgia Department of Public Health has determined that you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19, a close contact of yours has sent you this information because they tested positive for COVID-19, or you believe you are a close contact of a COVID 19 case, please follow the guidance below.

It is very important for your own safety and for the safety of others that you monitor your health for 14 days from your last possible exposure to COVID-19, and that you remain at home, avoid congregating settings and public activities, and practice social distancing. You are required to cooperate fully with all state and federal public health authorities, including the Georgia Department of Public Health, and to follow the measures outlined below. The Georgia Administrative Order for Public Health Control Measures can be found here:

<https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/secondamendedaoig41201pdf/download>

Specifically, you agree to:

If you are not sick, you agree to monitor your health for fever, cough and shortness of breath during the 14 days after the last day you were in close contact with the sick person with COVID-19.

- Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms.
- Quarantine yourself at home except in case of emergency.
 - If you are a health care provider, emergency medical services worker, first responder, or other critical infrastructure worker, you may continue to work, in consultation with your workplace occupational health program and if necessary to ensure adequate staffing, if you have no symptoms, wear a mask while on duty, and remain at home at all other times.
- If possible, stay away from other people living in your home, especially those who are at high risk for getting very sick from COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/index.html>
- Enroll in active monitoring. Through active monitoring, you will report your temperature and any symptoms to the Georgia Department of Public Health each day, either by responding to a text message or calling 1-888-357-0169 if you are unable to text.
- If you have not been contacted by public health, you can notify public health here: <https://intake-app-dot-gdph-erm-qa.appspot.com/>

How may I have been exposed?

You generally need to be in close contact with a sick person to get infected. Close contact includes:

- Living in the same household as a sick person with COVID-19;
- Caring for a sick person with COVID-19;
- Being within 6 feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for about 15 minutes; OR,
- Being in direct contact with secretions from a sick person with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.).

COVID-19 virus is circulating in Georgia and you should take steps to protect yourself. Wash hands often with soap and water, use hand sanitizer, and avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands. Disinfect frequently touched surfaces in your home daily. Maintain distance from others, especially those who are sick.

What should I do if I am a close contact to someone with COVID-19 and get sick?

If you get sick with fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, headache, sore throat, new loss of taste or smell (even if your symptoms are very mild), you must stay at home and away from other people.

- Call 911 immediately if you believe you are experiencing a medical emergency. You must inform 911 that you may be sick with COVID-19 and wear a face covering.
- If it is not an emergency, but you are sick and require medical care, please contact your primary care doctor, an urgent care clinic, or your local federally qualified healthcare center.
- If you are mildly ill and do not require medical care, you can schedule testing by calling your local health department. You can find contact information for your health department here: <https://dph.georgia.gov/document/document/covid-19-testingdirect-patient-line/download>
- In order to prevent spreading COVID-19 it is critical that you follow the isolation instructions found here: <https://dph.georgia.gov/isolation-contact>
- The information provided here is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

CDC guidance: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/social-distancing.html>
Contact information for the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH): 1-866-PUB-HLTH (782-4584)