

Managing Covid 19 at home -with assistance from your GP

If I have mild symptoms such as:

- aches and pains
- dry cough
- runny nose

I will manage these symptoms by:

- getting enough rest
- staying active (staying within my house and/or garden)
- eating well
- maintaining a good fluid intake
- taking any medicines discussed with my GP (or other health provider).

I will continue to monitor and document my symptoms in the daily symptom diary.

If I get any moderate symptoms, such as:

- symptom diary looking like it is tracking worse, rather than stable or better
- temperature above 38 degrees
- vomiting or diarrhoea
- mild breathlessness or a persistent cough
- struggling to get out of bed and feeling abnormally tired and weak

I will contact my GP for review as soon as possible. I will continue to monitor and document my symptoms in the daily symptom diary.

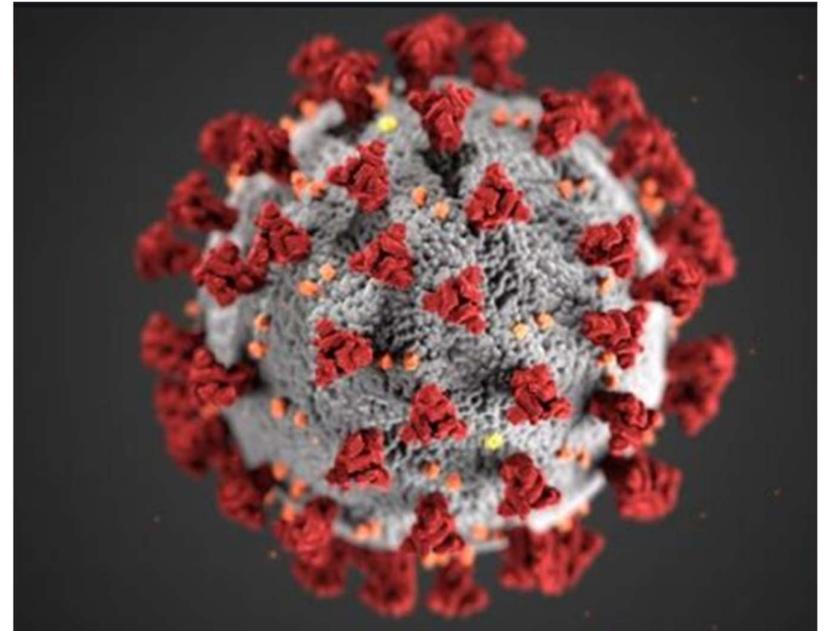
If I get any severe symptoms, such as:

- severe shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- lips or face turning blue
- pain or pressure in my chest
- skin cold and clammy, or pale and mottled
- confusion (eg I can't recall the day, time or names)
- fainting
- finding it difficult to keep my eyes open
- little or no urine output
- coughing up blood

I will call 111 immediately and let them know that I have COVID-19.

GP contact phone: 07/3787060

Covid Healthline: **0800 358 5453**



Name:	
Age:	Date of birth:
Relevant Medical History:	
Current medications:	
Allergies:	
Date of symptoms onset:	Date of positive covid test:
Next of Kin:	
Relationship:	
Contact details:	

Keep this action plan somewhere easy to find

Fill out the symptom checklist every day while you are unwell, or as long as advised by your GP. It will help you keep a check on how you're feeling, and will also help your GP track your symptoms and determine whether your management plan needs changing.

If you need to consult any healthcare professional or call for an ambulance, show them this plan

Using a pulse oximeter:

Pulse oximeters are medical devices that use red and infrared light to determine how much oxygen is circulating in your blood. The device is designed like a clip, that covers the tip of your finger. Pulse oximeters measure your oxygen level and your heart rate. They must be positioned properly and used on fingers with good circulation.



How to use

1. Sit in a comfortable position.
2. Ensure that your hands are clean and relatively warm.
3. Remove any nail polish, artificial nails bandages or anything else covering your nails.
4. If your fingers are cold, warm your fingers by running them under good warm water or with a warm cloth, and by rubbing them – the oximeter needs good circulation to the finger to give an accurate reading.
5. Open the pulse oximeter like a clothespin. Do not force it, it should open easily and just wide enough to allow your finger to fit inside.
6. Slide your forefinger or middle finger from either hand as far in as it will easily advance.
7. The pulse oximeter will turn on automatically when you insert your finger, the display may flash as it obtains the reading.
8. While waiting for the numbers to stabilize, check the battery indicator on the display. If the battery is low, contact your GP for advice.
9. Try to keep your hand relaxed and still while the pulse oximeter is measuring your oxygen level. There may be a small light or bar that illuminates every time your heart beats.
10. After about 1 minute record your oxygen level. The top number on the display is your oxygen level, the other number is your heart rate.
11. Remove the pulse oximeter from your finger. The device will turn off automatically and is ready to use again.

Results

Your care team will advise you what pulse oximetry levels are acceptable for you. Generally, an oxygen level of 93% or greater is acceptable. **If your reading is less than 93% contact your care team. If your reading is lower by more than 3 points from the previous day try a different finger to check the accuracy. If that reading is still more than 3 points lower, contact your care team:**

Isolating at home

Anyone diagnosed with COVID-19 must isolate to prevent the spread of infection. Isolation involves:

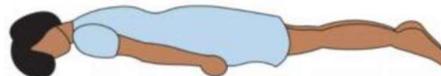
- **Staying at home**, unless you need to leave to get medical care. If you're isolating, do not attend work or school, visit public areas, or travel on public transport or in taxis or ride-share services. You must always call ahead before attending a healthcare service, and you must advise the healthcare service that you have COVID-19. In many cases you will be able to receive medical care using telehealth (using a phone or video), and medicines can be arranged by your pharmacist or GP to be delivered to your home.
- **Living in a separate room** away from other people in your household, if possible. If you can stay in a separate, well-ventilated room away from the other people in your household, you should do so. Use a separate bathroom that others do not use, if you can. If you cannot isolate in a separate room, avoid shared spaces in the house as much as possible and wear a mask when moving through shared areas.
- **Ensuring others do not enter your home**, unless they are providing necessary medical or personal care. The people who usually live in your house with you can continue to stay in the house with you. However, they are considered to be close contacts and are also required to isolate (refer to 'Advice for caregivers and other people in the household'). Do not allow other people to enter your home, unless they are providing essential medical or personal care.
- **Having groceries and other essential items delivered** to your home. As all household members will be in isolation, it is important to arrange delivery of groceries and other essential items. Supermarkets have increased their capacity for home deliveries during this time. If you are having difficulty, consider phoning friends or neighbours who may be able to drop essential items to your door.
- Your GP or local public health unit will advise you when isolation is no longer required and you can return to your community, adhering to any restrictions currently in place in your local area.

Managing viral symptoms

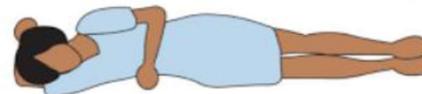
- **Rest**- Do not do activities that trigger your heart or breathing rate to go up too much.
- **Hydrate**- prevent dehydration but drinking more fluids than you usually would. If you are not drinking enough your urine will get darker.
- **Eat a healthy diet** - sometimes small meals are easier to manage
- **Take paracetamol** if you have a temperature or headache
- **Get up and move about** at regular intervals
- **Change positions** – change positions frequently to help move secretions and reduce the work of breathing if needed.

Change position every 30 minutes to 2 hours. Sitting up is better than lying on your back. Do not spend a lot of time lying flat on your back

1. 30 minutes – 2 hours: laying on your belly



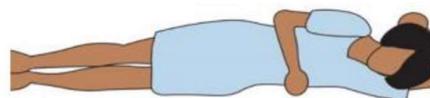
2. 30 minutes – 2 hours: laying on your right side



3. 30 minutes – 2 hours: sitting up



4. 30 minutes – 2 hours: lying on your left side



Then back to Position 1. Lying on your belly!



Taking care of your mental health

Being in isolation can be stressful and create anxiety. The following are some ways to look after your mental health over this time.

- Keep in touch with friends and family. Maintain contact with loved ones via telephone, email and social media, or by using video technologies like WhatsApp and Zoom.
- Develop or maintain a daily routine. This could include showering and getting dressed each day, having regular mealtimes, and exercising (within your home or garden).
- Use the time to do new things. Time in isolation can provide an opportunity to activities like crafting, drawing, reading or writing.
- Spend time outdoors. If you have a private courtyard, balcony or garden, spend some time there each day to get some fresh air.
- Learn more about COVID-19 from trustworthy and credible sources. Understanding more about the virus might help you feel less anxious.
<https://www.peoplefirst.org.nz/easy-read-information-about-covid-19/>
<https://www.healthnavigator.org.nz/health-a-z/c/covid-19-key-information/>
- Learn what support is available to you by visiting
<https://covid19.govt.nz/about-this-site/contact-and-support/>

Useful contact numbers

- **Need to talk:** Call or text 1737 – speak to a qualified counsellor; available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- **Youthline:** 0800376633
- **Youth text options:** “The lowdown” Text 5626 or “Need to talk” Text 1737

Speak to your GP if your mental health worsens or you have any concerns. Your GP is there to support your physical and mental health.

Relaxation:

Relaxation is an important part of energy conservation. It can also help you to control your anxiety, improve the quality of your life and reduce pain and discomfort. Below are two relaxation techniques you can use to manage anxiety and help you relax.

Grounding technique for when you feel anxious:

1. Take a few slow gentle breaths and ask yourself:
2. What are five things I can see?
3. What are four things I can feel?
4. What are three things I can hear?
5. What are two things that I can smell?
6. What is one thing I can taste?

Think of these answers to yourself slowly, one sense at a time spending at least 10 seconds focusing on each sense.

Picture yourself somewhere calm:

Think of somewhere relaxing and peaceful. It could be a memory of somewhere you have been or a made up place.

1. Close your eyes, and think about the details of this place.
2. What does it look like?
3. What colours and shapes can you see?
4. Can you hear any sounds?
5. Is it warm or cool?
6. What does the ground feel like?
7. Spend some time imagining each of these.

