

Guidance from the Danish Health Authority

What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19

In this leaflet we answer some of the questions you may have if you develop symptoms of COVID-19. You can read about the importance of staying alert and safe, how to get tested etc.

28.07.2020



Important information about novel coronavirus/COVID-19

COVID-19 is the name of the disease caused by novel coronavirus.

Infection



In order to prevent the spread of infection, it is important to know how novel coronavirus is transmitted.

Transmission through contact: Transmission through touching surfaces or objects which have been used by an infected person, and then touching your nose, eyes or mouth. The risk of contact transmission can be reduced by practising good hand hygiene and making sure to clean thoroughly.

Droplet transmission: Person-to-person transmission via small droplets expelled from the airways (respiratory tract) when an infected person coughs, sneezes etc. The droplets fall to the ground within one to two metres, and so the risk of droplet transmission is reduced through social distancing.

Symptoms



Typical symptoms of COVID-19:

Dry cough	Sore throat
A high temperature	Headache
Breathing difficulties	Muscle pain

How to prevent the spread of infection



The most important things to do in order of priority:

1. Isolating persons who display symptoms and tracing their close contacts
2. Practising good hygiene focusing on cough etiquette (respiratory hygiene), hand hygiene and points of contact
3. Social distancing focusing on distance, frequency, duration and barriers

If you are unable to comply with one of the recommendations, make sure that you comply with the others.

1. What should you do if you develop symptoms of COVID-19?

If you develop symptoms and are unsure whether it is COVID-19, you should act as if you are infected with novel coronavirus, as follows:

1. Self-isolate
2. Practise good hygiene
3. Make sure to clean thoroughly
4. Call your doctor for an assessment and perhaps to get a referral, even if your symptoms are mild

How do I self-isolate?

The most important way of preventing the spread of infection is through ensuring that people infected with novel coronavirus self-isolate. If you have symptoms, there is no way of knowing whether you are infected with novel coronavirus until you have been tested. It is therefore important that you self-isolate until you have been tested and have the test result.

Self-isolation guidance:

- Stay at home, that is in your own home or in your own garden so that you do not risk coming into close contact with other people. Do not go to work or public areas, not even to go shopping etc. Ask others to do your shopping for you, take your dog for a walk etc. If you order food and other essentials for home delivery, make sure that deliveries are left outside your front door. Do not allow visitors to enter your home. Use the phone or video calls to talk to other people. It is particularly important to avoid all contact with people who are at risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (see sst.dk/corona).

In many communities, local initiatives have been launched to support those in need. Check to see if such support is available in your local area. You can also contact 'Røde Kors Corona Hjælpenetværk' on tel. 35 29 96 60 or visit rodekors.dk/corona/hjaelp.

- Avoid close contact with other members of your household. This is particularly important if you live with someone who is at risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Avoid close physical contact such as kissing and hugging and keep a distance of at least two metres. Avoid sleeping together and avoid spending too long in the same room. Ideally use a separate toilet/bathroom. If you only have one toilet/bathroom, you should make sure to clean all surfaces after use, e.g. by disinfecting toilet seats, basins and taps before they are used by other members of your household.

What does practising good hygiene involve?

Practising good hygiene means:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water, or use hand sanitiser if you do not have access to soap and water. Using hand sanitiser is as effective as washing your hands, but we recommend that you wash your hands if they are visibly dirty or wet, after toilet visits, after changing nappies and before handling food.
- Good hand hygiene is especially important after toilet visits, after blowing your nose and before you start cooking. It is important to use a moisturiser to prevent dry hands and reduce the risk of developing eczema.
- Avoid touching your face. Cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue or into your elbow. Place used disposable tissues in a rubbish bag and tie securely.
- Do not share towels with other people.

What does cleaning thoroughly involve?

Cleaning frequently and thoroughly means:

- The room(s) you spend time in while ill should be cleaned daily. Use ordinary cleaning agents. It is particularly important that you clean points of contact as well as objects and surfaces that are touched by many members of the household, such as handles, hand rails, switches, keyboards, computer mice, armrests, the edges of tables, toys, taps, toilets etc.

2. Calling your doctor and testing

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, you should always call your doctor. If you have symptoms, we recommend that you do not book a time for a test without first getting a referral from your doctor. Always remember to call first – never show up at your doctor's office without having made an appointment by phone first.

If your symptoms are mild, you should call your own doctor for an assessment and perhaps to get a referral. If you develop mild symptoms outside your doctor's opening hours, e.g. over the weekend, you must wait until the office opens, while making sure to follow the guidance in section 1.

If you develop moderate or severe symptoms, such as breathing difficulties, or if your condition deteriorates markedly over several days, and if you are so ill that you are unsure whether you should be hospitalised, please call your own doctor or the medical helpline in your region.

Your doctor may refer you for an assessment and test if your doctor finds that your condition should be assessed by a healthcare professional. If your symptoms are mild, your doctor may also refer you directly for testing without a prior assessment.

Once your doctor has referred you for testing, you should book a time for testing at coronaprover.dk as soon as possible, unless you have agreed otherwise with your doctor. Follow the instructions at coronaprover.dk. If you have any questions or need help, please call *Coronaopsøring* (Corona Tracking), a division of the Danish Patient Safety Authority, on tel. 32 32 05 11.

Make sure to wear a face mask if you need to leave your home for a short time, e.g. to go and have a test. You can read more about the use of face masks in the *leaflet published by the Danish Health Authority*.

How and when am I told about the test result?

You can see your test result online at sundhed.dk. If you cannot access sundhed.dk, you can call your doctor. Test results are normally available within a couple of days, but processing times may vary from region to region and may be longer during busy periods.

How should I act while waiting for my test result?

While waiting for your test result, you must continue to self-isolate and take the precautions described in section 1.

Special guidance concerning children

Most children develop only mild symptoms of COVID-19, but children should generally follow the same guidance as adults. Therefore, children with symptoms of COVID-19 should also be isolated and tested, and children who test positive should stay at home for at least 48 hours after symptoms go away.

Please remember that children need loving care and physical contact like hugs and comforting, and that this is more important than social distancing. So if nobody else can take care of the child, you should do so in the manner that you normally would, while still maintaining high hygiene and cleaning standards. This applies no matter whether it is you or the child who tests positive.

Do not send children to school/take children to daycare institutions etc. unless they have tested negative for novel coronavirus and are generally fit and healthy. Children are considered fit and healthy when they do not have a high temperature and their general state of health is not affected. This means that they must be able to participate in all normal activities, e.g. excursions and playing outdoors without needing special care and looking after.

If your child tests positive for novel coronavirus, please read the information material *What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus*.

3. Once you receive your test result

If your test is positive

If your test is positive for novel coronavirus, you must continue to self-isolate and take the precautions described in section 1 for at least 48 hours after symptoms go away.

Read our information material *What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus*.

Anyone who tests positive will be called by *Coronaopsporing* (Corona Tracking), a division of the Danish Patient Safety Authority, which provides guidance on how to stay safe, how to trace close contacts etc. You are also welcome to contact *Coronaopsporing* (Corona Tracking) yourself on tel. 32 32 05 11.

If you need medical advice about the progression of your illness etc., please call your own doctor.

If your test is negative

If your test is negative, you are not infected with novel coronavirus. However, if you have symptoms of an infectious disease, we always recommend that you stay at home and practise good hygiene to avoid spreading the infection to others.

If you have any questions or need specific advice about your illness, please call your own doctor.

4. Further information

If you have any questions about your illness, please call your doctor.

If you have any questions about what to do if you have tested positive, please call *Coronaopsporing* (Corona Tracking) on tel. **32 32 05 11**.

If you have other questions, you can call the Danish government's hotline on tel. **70 20 02 33**.

If you have tested positive for novel coronavirus, you can find further guidance in the information material *What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus*.

If you have had close contact with someone who has tested positive for novel coronavirus, you can find further guidance in the information material *What to do if you are a close contact of a person who has tested positive for novel coronavirus*.

You can read more about novel coronavirus and COVID-19 at sst.dk/corona.