

Self-care for COVID-19-like symptoms

If you have COVID-19 or think you might, you can expect the illness to go away on its own in about 10 to 14 days. In the meantime, there are things you can do at home to help yourself feel better:

- Stay home and get extra rest. Staying home will help stop the virus from spreading to others. Extra rest can help you feel better.
- Drink plenty of fluids to replace those you lost from a fever. Fluids also make a scratchy throat feel better and keep nasal mucus thin. Water, soup, fruit juice, and hot tea with lemon are all good choices. Drink enough fluids to keep your urine pale yellow.
- To help clear a stuffy nose, breathe moist air from a hot shower or from a sink filled with hot water.
- If the skin around your nose and lips gets sore from blowing your nose a lot, put a bit of petroleum jelly on the area. Always wash your hands after touching your face.
- Raise your head with an extra pillow if coughing keeps you awake at night.
- Don't smoke or breathe second-hand smoke. This is good advice anytime, but it's especially important when you have an illness that can affect your breathing, like COVID-19.
- To help with body aches and headache or to lower fever, try acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Carefully read and follow all directions on the package. Cough and cold medicines may not be safe for young children or people who have certain health problems.
- If you have a dry, hacking cough, you can try cough medicine (cough suppressant) to help stop the cough reflex. Ask your pharmacist which one is right for you. Children under 6 years should not use cough medicine.
- To soothe a sore throat, suck on throat lozenges or plain, hard candy. Don't give these to children under 6 years.
- Don't take antihistamines. They don't treat COVID-19 or flu symptoms and could make nasal drainage thicker.
- If a fever is making you uncomfortable, sponge your body with lukewarm water to lower the fever. Don't use cold water or ice. Lowering the fever won't make your symptoms go away faster, but it can make you more comfortable.
- For a stuffy nose, use salt water (saline) nose drops or rinses to loosen the dried mucus.
- Follow the exact directions for taking any prescription medicines.

Call 911 right away if you think you need emergency care. For example, call if:

- You have severe trouble breathing or severe chest pain.
- You are very confused or not thinking clearly.
- You pass out (lose consciousness).

Call your doctor or Health Link at 811 or seek immediate medical care if:

- You have new or worse trouble breathing.
- You have severe dehydration. Symptoms of dehydration include:
 - Having a very dry mouth

- Passing only a little urine
 - Feeling very light-headed
- Your symptoms are getting worse.
- You start getting better and then get worse.

For 24/7 nurse advice and general health information call Health Link at 811.