

## What To Expect If You Get COVID-19

Most people with COVID-19 get better with fluids, rest and over-the-counter medications for fever and aches.

Call your family doctor if you test positive for COVID-19 to check if you need an oximeter to track your oxygen levels. Track your symptoms daily, especially on Days 5-10 because that is when you'll know whether you need further medical attention.

### **Days 1-3**

The first day of symptoms of COVID-19 is Day 1.

- Mark Day 1 on your calendar.
- Read through the guidelines on isolation included in this package.
- Early symptoms of COVID-19 can vary, including:
  - Sore throat, runny nose, cough
  - Headache
  - Fever
  - Muscle pain
  - Shortness of breath
  - Chest pressure
  - Diarrhea, nausea, vomiting
  - Rashes, including blistering or swelling of the toes or fingers.
  - Confusion
- Some people don't get symptoms at all, and simply test positive for COVID-19. They must still isolate as directed by Public Health.

### **Days 4-6**

- Some patients have mild symptoms that improve after a week.
- Other patients feel awful with constant fever, aches and pains, chills and sweats, cough and so on.
  - These patients may feel better if they sleep on their stomach or their sides (see below).
  - Their appetite may be affected especially if they have a loss of smell or taste

### **Days 7-12**

- Patients who are getting better should continue to rest and hydrate.
- Patients who have a more severe illness must monitor their symptoms and oxygen levels and call their family doctor if they have red flag symptoms. Some will need to go to the hospital while others can continue recovering at home with closer monitoring.
  - These patients may feel better if they sleep on their stomach or sides (see below).

- **Call your family doctor or call the 24/7 Home & Community Care Line at (905) 855-9090 if you get any of the following red flag symptoms:**
  - **Worsening shortness of breath when crossing a room, getting dressed, eating**
  - **Being breathless for something that didn't make you breathless the day before**
  - **Chest pain or pressure**
  - **Lethargy or confusion**
  - **Inability to keep down food or fluids**
  - **Oxygen levels consistently less than 92% at rest and with activity**

#### **Days 13-14**

- Patients with mild or moderate illnesses will have begun to feel better. Patients with severe symptoms, who required additional treatment, will take far longer to recover.
- Some patients will have lingering symptoms of fatigue and other issues. Let your doctor know if this is the case.
- Resume gradual return to regular activity.

### **How To Use An Oximeter**

Oximeters are small devices that clip onto your fingertip to measure your oxygen level and heart rate. They are used commonly in medical offices and hospitals. The one you will use will be battery operated, so check and replace the batteries as needed.

Here's how to use an oximeter:

1. Sit in a comfortable position.
2. Make sure your hands are clean and warm. Remove any nail polish or artificial nails or any bandages covering the finger you are using to check your oxygen level.
3. Open the oximeter like a clothes pin. It should open easily and will be wide enough to fit your finger inside as far in as it goes. Keep your hand still.
4. Wait for the numbers to stabilize.
5. The top number is your oxygen level. Record this number in the oxygen level column.
6. The bottom number is your heart rate. Record this number in the heart rate column.
7. Remove your finger and the device will turn off automatically.

Normal oximeter readings range from 92% to 100%.

**If your readings are consistently below 92% at rest and with activity, you must call your family doctor or the 24/7 Home & Community Care Line at (905) 855-9090.**

Like other electronic devices, do not get the oximeter wet.

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*Adapted from The COVID-19 Symptom Timeline from the Georgian Bay Family Health Team, North Simcoe Muskoka LHIN, 2021.*

## Sleeping On Your Stomach or Side

Do not lie on your back the whole time you are sick with COVID-19. Lying on your stomach or side will not only make you feel better, it will also circulate air to other parts of your lungs. Here's how to do timed position changes to maximize your recovery from COVID-19. Cycle through each position, holding them for 30 minutes to 2 hours.

1. Lying on your stomach.
2. Lying on your right side.
3. Sitting up.
4. Lying on your left side.
5. Lying back on your stomach.

In pictures:

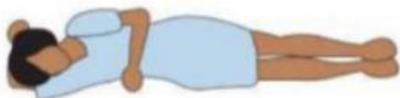
1. 30 minutes – 2 hours: lying fully prone (bed flat)



4. 30 minutes – 2 hours: lying on your left side (bed flat)



2. 30 minutes – 2 hours: lying on your right side (bed flat)



5. Then back to Position 1. Lying fully prone (bed flat)



3. 30 minutes – 2 hours: sitting up (30-60 degrees) by adjusting head of the bed



**Do not hesitate to call your doctor or the 24/7 Home & Community Care Line at (905) 855-9090 if you feel like your symptoms are quickly worsening!**

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