



NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

Information Sheet for Patients and Visitors

What is COVID-19?

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Most people who become infected will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without treatment. However, some people will become seriously ill and require medical attention. Older people and those with underlying medical conditions like cardiovascular disease, chronic respiratory disease, diabetes, or cancer are more likely to develop serious illness. It is possible to become seriously sick with COVID-19 or die at any age. Symptoms may include:

- Fever
- New or worsening cough
- Muscle aches and tiredness
- Difficulty breathing, shortness of breath
- Runny nose, nasal congestion (without other known cause)
- Sore throat
- Decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell
- Chills, headaches
- Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
- Abdominal pain
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Those over 70 years of age may experience symptoms of delirium, unexplained falls, acute functional decline or worsening of chronic conditions.
- Children are more likely to have abdominal symptoms and changes to the skin or rashes

How is COVID-19 spread?

COVID-19 is spread most commonly through close contact (less than 2 metres) through an infected person's respiratory droplets when they breathe, cough, sneeze, talk, or sing. These droplets range in size from large ones which fall quickly to the ground to smaller ones, also known as aerosols, which can remain suspended in the air. The highest risk for aerosol transmission occurs during longer periods of time indoors with poor air flow without masking or distancing. Objects or surfaces (e.g., furniture, equipment) that have the COVID-19 virus on them may transmit the virus from your hands to your eyes, nose and mouth if your hands are not washed after contact.

What special precautions are required for COVID-19?

- You will either be isolated in a private room or with roommate who also has COVID-19.
- A sign will be placed on your door to remind anyone entering your room that they must wear a long-sleeved gown, gloves, mask, and eye protection.
- Visitors are not permitted while you are being isolated.
- The isolation period is usually 10 days after your day of diagnosis or symptom onset (if known). Our infection control team will assess your symptoms and determine when your isolation may stop. Some people will have to remain in isolation for 20 days if they have been critically ill, have underlying illnesses, or take medications that suppress the immune system making them infectious for a longer period of time.
- You need to wear a mask whenever someone is within 2 metres and wash your hands frequently