

Managing COVID-19 Symptoms at Home

COVID-19 is similar to other viruses you might get during cold and flu season, and most people can recover at home without needing medical attention. Current treatment recommendations are to manage individual symptoms.

Common symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Congestion or runny nose
- New fatigue
- Headache
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Upset stomach, nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat

Managing Fever

Use fever- and pain-reducing medication according to the manufacturer's directions. These medications include acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin).

Managing cough and shortness of breath

Over-the-counter medications used for upper respiratory infections may help alleviate symptoms.

Those medications include guaifenesin (Mucinex), pseudoephedrine (Sudafed) and dextromethorphan (Robitussin, Delsym)

Some medications include multiple drugs; contact your physician if you plan to take more than one medication to manage your symptoms.

Other treatments that may help include:

- Using a humidifier
- Using a nasal rinse
- Using a chest rub, such as Vicks VapoRub
- Taking a hot shower
- Propping yourself up with pillows
- Practice slow deep breathing in through the nose, out through the mouth

Maintain Healthy Habits

Be sure to stay hydrated by drinking plenty of fluids. In general, you should drink a minimum of 8 250 mL cups of fluid each day when you have a cold or flu.

If you are experiencing stomach upset, you should drink even more by continuously sipping smaller amounts of salt-containing fluids such as sports drinks.

Get plenty of rest, and wash your hands frequently. Incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables into your diet.

- Spinach and nuts are rich in vitamin E.
- Citrus fruits, cantaloupe, watermelon and berries are rich in vitamin C.

Incorporate exercise as you're able.

Eliminate stressors as best you can; keep connected to your friends and family through phone calls or other technology.

Consult with Your Physician

- If you are using a nebulizer, please talk to your physician about whether or not you should continue. Nebulizers atomize or create very fine droplets that go into the lung and can come back out containing COVID-19 particles.

Call Your Clinic or the Avera COVID-19 Hotline (1-877-AT-AVERA)

Please call your clinic or the COVID-19 hotline toll-free at 1-877-AT-AVERA if you are experiencing any of the following symptoms:

- Respiratory distress: Monitor your breathing by asking yourself "How is my breathing? Do I feel comfortable?" If you cannot talk in full sentences, you need to see your physician.
- Gastrointestinal distress: If you cannot keep fluids or food in your system due to vomiting or diarrhea.
- Fever of 104 or higher that is not responding to acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin).

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