

COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

What are Avalon facilities doing to keep patients safe from infection?

Avalon facilities have implemented the following increased measures to protect our patients and residents from infection:

- Taking daily temperature readings for all employees, residents, patients, and visitors.
- Monitoring for respiratory symptoms which include cough, sore throat, and shortness of breath at periodic intervals throughout the day.
- Group activities, including group dining and other social activities in high risk areas, are suspended.
- Group outings and activities are postponed until further notice.

What visitation restrictions have you implemented?

Pursuant to federal requirements, visitors will be restricted, except under the following limited circumstances:

- End-of-life situations.
- Health care professionals, as required by the plan of care.
- Avalon skilled nursing and senior care communities will follow federal and state guidelines as they evolve.

Who are considered essential personnel that are allowed into the facility during this time?

Staff providing direct patient care, dietary workers and suppliers, Administration staff.

What should essential visitors do differently?

Let us know if you are experiencing any cold or flu-like symptoms. This would include dry cough, shortness of breath, fever, aches, and chills. If so, we would ask that you refrain from visiting today.

Should families who are worried move their loved ones out of your skilled nursing facilities?

No. Moving a vulnerable patient is risky and can often have long-lasting impact. CDC does not currently recommend transferring residents in non-emergent situations either home or to the hospital during this time.

What Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protocols are you implementing?

We require proper and frequent handwashing (hand hygiene). As we care for our residents, we follow guidance for the use of PPE provided by the Centers for Disease Control.

How are you ensuring you have enough PPE supplies?

We monitor our PPE supplies daily. We coordinate carefully with our network of suppliers.

Are you still available to transport patients?

Yes. Where available, Avalon facilities will continue to transport patients as needed. We do not anticipate a disruption in this service.

CDC Frequently Asked Questions

[\(Obtained from CDC.gov\):](#)

What is a novel coronavirus?

A novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), is not the same as the coronaviruses that commonly circulate among humans and cause mild illness, like the common cold.

A diagnosis with coronavirus 229E, NL63, OC43, or HKU1 is not the same as a COVID-19 diagnosis. Patients with COVID-19 will be evaluated and cared for differently than patients with common coronavirus diagnosis.

Why is the disease being called COVID-19?

On February 11, 2020, the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak, first identified in Wuhan China. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease. Formerly, this disease was referred to as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV".

There are many types of human coronaviruses, including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans. The name of this disease was selected following the World Health Organization (WHO) best practice external icon for the naming of new human infectious diseases.

What is the source of the virus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses. Some cause illness in people, and others, such as canine and feline coronaviruses, only infect animals. Rarely, animal coronaviruses that infect animals have emerged to infect people and can spread between people. This is suspected to have occurred for the virus that causes COVID-19. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS)

and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) are two other examples of coronaviruses that originated from animals and then spread to people.

How does the virus spread?

This virus was first detected in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China. The first infections were linked to a live animal market, but the virus is now spreading from person-to-person. It's important to note that person-to-person spread can happen on a continuum. Some viruses are highly contagious (like measles), while other viruses are less so.

The virus that causes COVID-19 seems to be spreading easily and sustainably in the community ("community spread") in some affected geographic areas. Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

Can someone who has had COVID-19 spread the illness to others?

The virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading from person-to-person. Someone who is actively sick with COVID-19 can spread the illness to others. That is why CDC recommends that these patients be isolated either in the hospital or at home (depending on how sick they are) until they are better and no longer pose a risk of infecting others.

How long someone is actively sick can vary so the decision on when to release someone from isolation is made on a case-by-case basis in consultation with doctors, infection prevention and control experts, and public health officials and involves considering specifics of each situation including disease severity, illness signs and symptoms, and results of laboratory testing for that patient.

Current CDC guidance for when it is OK to release someone from isolation is made on a case by case basis and includes meeting all of the following requirements:

- The patient is free from fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.
- The patient is no longer showing symptoms, including cough.
- The patient has tested negative on at least two consecutive respiratory specimens collected at least 24 hours apart.

Someone who has been released from isolation is not considered to pose a risk of infection to others.

Can someone who has been quarantined for COVID-19 spread the illness to others?

Quarantine means separating a person or group of people who have been exposed to a contagious disease but have not developed illness (symptoms) from others who have not been exposed, in order to prevent the possible spread of that disease. Quarantine is usually

established for the incubation period of the communicable disease, which is the span of time during which people have developed illness after exposure. For COVID-19, the period of quarantine is 14 days from the last date of exposure, because 14 days is the longest incubation period seen for similar coronaviruses. Someone who has been released from COVID-19 quarantine is not considered a risk for spreading the virus to others because they have not developed illness during the incubation period.

Can the virus that causes COVID-19 be spread through food, including refrigerated or frozen food?

Coronaviruses are generally thought to be spread from person-to-person through respiratory droplets. Currently, there is no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with food. Before preparing or eating food, it is important to always wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds for general food safety. Throughout the day, wash your hands after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing, or going to the bathroom.

It may be possible that a person can get COVID-19 by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching their own mouth, nose, or possibly their eyes, but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads.

In general, because of poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from food products or packaging that is shipped over a period of days or weeks at ambient, refrigerated, or frozen temperatures.

What temperature kills the virus that causes COVID-19?

Generally, coronaviruses survive for shorter periods of time at higher temperatures and higher humidity than in cooler or dryer environments. However, we don't have direct data for this virus, nor do we have direct data for a temperature-based cutoff for inactivation at this point. The necessary temperature would also be based on the materials of the surface, the environment, etc. Regardless of temperature, please follow CDC's guidance for cleaning and disinfection.

Who is at higher risk for serious illness from COVID-19?

COVID-19 is a new disease and there is limited information regarding risk factors for severe disease. Based on currently available information and clinical expertise, older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Based upon available information to date, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 include:

- People aged 65 years and older
- People who live in a nursing home or long-term care facility

- Other high-risk conditions could include:
 - People with chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
 - People who have heart disease with complications
 - People who are immunocompromised including cancer treatment
 - People of any age with severe obesity (body mass index [(BMI)] ≥ 40) or certain underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, such as those with diabetes, renal failure, or liver disease might also be at risk
- People who are pregnant should be monitored since they are known to be at risk with severe viral illness, however, to date data on COVID-19 has not shown increased risk

What should people at higher risk of serious illness with COVID-19 do?

If you are at higher risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, you should: stock up on supplies; take everyday precautions to keep space between yourself and others; when you go out in public, keep away from others who are sick; limit close contact and wash your hands often; and avoid crowds, cruise travel, and non-essential travel. If there is an outbreak in your community, stay home as much as possible. Watch for symptoms and emergency signs. If you get sick, stay home and call your doctor. More information on how to prepare, what to do if you get sick, and how communities and caregivers can support those at higher risk is available on People at Risk for Serious Illness from COVID-19.

What is community spread?

Community spread means people have been infected with the virus in an area, including some who are not sure how or where they became infected.

How can I help protect myself?

There is currently no vaccine to prevent coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19). The best way to prevent illness is to avoid being exposed to this virus. However, as a reminder, CDC always recommends everyday preventive actions to help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases, including:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces using a regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom; before eating; and after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing.
- If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.

- Follow CDC's recommendations for using a facemask (See below)

Does CDC recommend the use of facemask to prevent COVID-19?

CDC does not recommend that people who are well wear a facemask to protect themselves from respiratory illnesses, including COVID-19. You should only wear a mask if a healthcare professional recommends it. A facemask should be used by people who have COVID-19 and are showing symptoms. This is to protect others from the risk of getting infected. The use of facemasks also is crucial for health workers and other people who are taking care of someone infected with COVID-19 in close settings (at home or in a health care facility).

What should I do if I had close contact with someone who has COVID-19?

Close contacts should monitor their health; they should call their healthcare provider right away if they develop symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath). There is information for people who have had close contact with a person confirmed to have, or being evaluated for, COVID-19 available online.

What are the symptoms and complications that COVID-19 can cause?

Current symptoms reported for patients with COVID-19 have included mild to severe respiratory illness with fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Read about COVID-19 Symptoms.

Should I be tested for COVID-19?

If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice. Clinicians should work with their state and local health departments to coordinate testing through public health laboratories or work with clinical or commercial laboratories.

Can a person test negative and later test positive for COVID-19?

Using the CDC-developed diagnostic test, a negative result means that the virus that causes COVID-19 was not found in the person's sample. In the early stages of infection, it is possible the virus will not be detected.

For COVID-19, a negative test result for a sample collected while a person has symptoms likely means that the COVID-19 virus is not causing their current illness.

What should I do if there is an outbreak in my community?

During an outbreak, stay calm and put your preparedness plan to work. Follow the steps below:

Protect yourself and others.

- Stay home if you are sick. Keep away from people who are sick. Limit close contact with others as much as possible (about 6 feet).

Put your household plan into action.

- Stay informed about the local COVID-19 situation. Be aware of temporary school dismissals in your area, as this may affect your household's daily routine.
- Continue practicing everyday preventive actions. Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue and wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains 60% alcohol. Clean frequently touched surfaces and objects daily using a regular household detergent and water.
- Notify your workplace as soon as possible if your regular work schedule changes. Ask to work from home or take leave if you or someone in your household gets sick with COVID-19 symptoms, or if your child's school is dismissed temporarily. Learn how businesses and employers can plan for and respond to COVID-19.
- Stay in touch with others by phone or email. If you have a chronic medical condition and live alone, ask family, friends, and health care providers to check on you during an outbreak. Stay in touch with family and friends, especially those at increased risk of developing severe illness, such as older adults and people with severe chronic medical conditions.