Instructions for Isolation

According to the Center for Disease Control, patients who are either presumed or confirmed positive for COVID-19 should remain under home isolation for a minimum of 10 days in order to limit the risk of secondary transmission to others. The decision to discontinue home isolation precautions is made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with a healthcare provider and local health department. In general, sick individuals are considered no longer contagious when they have been in isolation for a minimum of 10 days or at least 72 hours after their last symptoms (without the aid of over-the-counter medications), whichever is longer.

Most patients with COVID-19 have mild symptoms and recover on their own within 7-14 days. The symptoms can be managed with hydration, rest, and occasional Tylenol.

While in isolation, consider the following:

**When possible, do not share a bathroom or bedroom with others**

Because current evidence suggests that novel coronavirus may remain viable for hours to days on a variety of surfaces, proper cleaning and disinfecting are crucial to keeping others safe. Cleaning refers to the removal of germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces. Cleaning does not kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection. Disinfecting refers to using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but killing germs on a surface after cleaning lowers the risk of spreading infection.

If you need to share a bathroom while you are sick, the bathroom should be cleaned and disinfected before and after each use by each person. Pay attention to the toilet handle, faucet handles, and door handles. It works best to saturate a paper towel and wipe down each high-touch area instead of spraying the area and wiping it off with a dry towel after it has been visibly wet for at least 30 seconds.

If you are near the end of your illness and your fever and cough have improved, but you continue to have other mild symptoms, you may consider leaving the bedroom if you wash your hands thoroughly and put on a facemask before entering the rest of the house. Please remain out of the kitchen until you have been symptoms free for 72 hours. Others should not enter your bedroom while you are symptomatic.

**Monitor your symptoms multiple times a day**

Monitor your symptoms and take your temperature at least twice a day. Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is getting worse (for example, you have difficulty breathing). Before seeking care in person, call ahead and tell them you have been or are being evaluated for COVID-19. Put a facemask on or cover your mouth and nose with a scarf before you enter any healthcare facility.
**Stay home until cleared from quarantine**
When in quarantine, you must not go to public places including Calvin’s campus, the grocery stores, or the pharmacy. You may go for a walk or drive, but only with those in your household who are also in quarantine. Do not visit friends or extended family. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis. Do not have guests over. Clearance from quarantine usually happens 14 days after the last day you were in close contact with a sick person presumed to have COVID-19, assuming you do not show any symptoms. For those living with an ill person, this is typically several days longer than 14 days. Continue to measure your temperature each morning and night during quarantine. You will learn what your general baseline temperature is within the first few days and the rise in temperature by more than one degree may be an early indication of oncoming illness. Practice isolation and continue to monitor for signs of illness. Only those who remain asymptomatic may be cleared from quarantine.

**Avoid sharing personal household items while you are sick**
The sick person should be served meals in their bedroom while they have a fever, cough, or congestion. Serve food on disposable plates and use disposable silverware to avoid having well people handling dishes.

**Avoid touching the laundry of anyone who is sick**
If the sick person cannot do their own laundry, avoid touching it by having the sick person drop their laundry onto a clean towel. The caregiver can then touch the clean towel and place it, along with the dirty laundry, into the washing machine. Laundered clothes are no longer contagious.

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**Instructions for Home Quarantine**

Home quarantine is required for anyone exposed to an individual who is either presumed or confirmed positive for COVID-19. In many cases, a person in quarantine is living with the COVID-19 patient.

**Stay home until cleared from quarantine**
For the few students still sharing a bathroom while living on campus, notify housing staff as soon as possible when someone becomes ill. Isolation is key to limiting spread. Housing will assist with altering living arrangements when someone becomes ill while during this outbreak.

**If you become ill, separate**
Notify your healthcare provider if you have any symptoms during quarantine. The early symptoms may be subtle and can include chills for a couple hours after which you feel well again for a day, scratchy throat, headache, or mild cough. The first few days of COVID-19 can be so subtle that many people don’t realize they are sick, so pay attention to any early signs of illness and begin strict isolation until you have more clarity. Most people in quarantine with symptoms of COVID-19 have clear evidence of being sick within the next 72 hours. Work with your provider to determine day-to-day isolation parameters.