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Instructions for Close Contacts of Confirmed COVID-19 Patients

You have been identified as someone who may have been a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 patient. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention defines a close contact as a person who was within 6 feet (2 meters) of a confirmed COVID-19 patient for more than 10 minutes. Most close contacts will experience mild illness or no illness at all, but to help us prevent the spread of COVID-19, we are asking you to please read the following guidance and follow it closely. If you have any questions or concerns, you can reach the Communicable Disease Unit at 708-836-8699.

Close contacts should stay at home (be quarantined) for 14 days following their last contact with a confirmed case. If you live in the same household and have ongoing contact with a confirmed case, you should stay home for a minimum of 14 days or for 7 days after the confirmed case is fever-free and feeling well, **whichever is longer**. In most cases, this means the close contact will need to stay home longer than the confirmed case.

While staying at home, please use the included Symptom Log to monitor yourself for fever or other symptoms of COVID-19. If you develop mild symptoms during your quarantine period, **please stay home if possible**. This will help save our healthcare workers from additional, unnecessary exposures and conserve their limited supply of protective gear like masks. Testing is not necessary for mild illnesses as it will not change how your doctor would treat you. If you **have underlying medical conditions (e.g. diabetes, heart disease), are immunocompromised, or over 65 years old** and develop mild symptoms, please contact your doctor for medical advice. If your symptoms become severe and you need to seek medical attention, **please call ahead** to the medical facility so they can prepare for your arrival. People who are sick with a COVID-19 like illness should stay home for a minimum of 7 days or for 3 days after your fever and symptoms are gone, **whichever is longer**.

Important Tips for Home Quarantine

Please read this information completely.

- You may exercise out of doors away from other people and again, do not need to wear a mask.
- If you have scheduled medical appointments unrelated to COVID-19 and these visits cannot be delayed, you should keep those appointments.
- Limit close contact with others living in your home. As much as possible, limit your contact with people. You should avoid having visitors to your home, but it is okay for friends, family or delivery drivers to drop off food or prescriptions.
- If you are in a home, apartment, or dormitory where the other members have not been exposed, minimize close contact with them as described above. If you feel well, there is no need to wear a mask at home.
- You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, pillows, or other items with other people in your home. After using these items, you should wash them thoroughly with soap and water, place them in the dishwasher for cleaning, or wash them in your washing machine.
- Take care of yourself. Your emotional and mental health is important. It is normal to feel stressed or lonely if you are limiting contact with others, but there are some things you can do to feel better. Reach out to your usual supports, like family and friends, and talk about how you feel. We also recommend sticking to a routine such as having regular meal times, bed-times and exercising. You may exercise in your home or outside away from others.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes and wash your hands. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, or you can cough or sneeze into your sleeve. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can. Wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. You can use a hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available and if your hands are not visibly dirty. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Please self-monitor for symptoms using attached monitoring log until 14 days after your last exposure. The last day of exposure is counted as day 0. On the 15th day, your quarantine period is over.
- If you have general questions about COVID-19, please call the Illinois Department of Public Health hotline at 1-800-889-3931 or email DPH.SICK@ILLINOIS.GOV.