

**VNA Health cares about our patients and their families and caregivers.
If you have questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call us at 805-965-5555.**

We want you to be safe during the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) outbreak so we encourage you to review the following recommendations from the CDC as to how to best protect yourself and your loved ones during this outbreak. **While caring for someone who may have COVID-19, family and caregivers should take many of the same precautions as you would if you were caring for someone with the flu.**

CLOSE CONTACT PARAMETERS

- Household members, intimate partners, and caregivers in a non-healthcare setting may have “close contact” with a person with symptomatic, laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 or a person under investigation.
- **“Close contact” is defined as being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time while caring for, living with, visiting, or sharing a health care waiting area or room with a COVID-19 case ... OR ... having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on).**
- **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).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILY & CAREGIVERS

- **Make sure that you understand and can help the patient follow their healthcare provider's instructions for medication(s) and care.**
 - You should help the patient with basic needs in the home and provide support for getting groceries, prescriptions, and other personal needs.
- **Monitor the patient's symptoms.**
 - If the patient is getting sicker, call his or her healthcare provider and tell them that the patient has laboratory-confirmed COVID-19. This will help the healthcare provider's office take steps to keep other people in the office or waiting room from getting infected.
 - Ask the healthcare provider to call the local or state health department for additional guidance.
 - If the patient has a medical emergency and you need to call 911, notify the dispatch personnel that the patient has, or is being evaluated for COVID-19.
- **Stay in another room or be separated from the patient as much as possible.** Use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if available.
- **Prohibit visitors** who do not have an essential need to be in the home.
- **Make sure that shared spaces in the home have good air flow.** Turn on an air conditioner or open a window.
- **Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer** that contains 60 to 95% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry. Use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.



- **Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.**
- **You and the patient should wear a facemask if you are in the same room.**
- **Wear a disposable facemask and gloves when you touch or have contact with the patient's blood, stool, or body fluids, such as saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine.**
 - Throw out disposable facemasks and gloves after using them. Do not reuse.
 - When removing personal protective equipment, first remove and dispose of gloves. Then, immediately clean your hands with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Next, remove and dispose of facemask, and immediately clean your hands again with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- **Avoid sharing household items with the patient.**
 - You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items.
 - After the patient uses these items, you should wash them thoroughly (see below “Wash laundry thoroughly”).
- **Clean all “high-touch” surfaces**, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day. Also, clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
- **Use a household cleaning spray or wipe**, according to the label instructions.
 - Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
- **Wash laundry thoroughly.**
 - Immediately remove and wash clothes or bedding that have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
 - Wear disposable gloves while handling soiled items and keep soiled items away from your body.
 - Clean your hands (with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) immediately after removing your gloves.
 - Read and follow directions on labels of laundry or clothing items and detergent. In general, using a normal laundry detergent according to washing machine instructions and dry thoroughly using the warmest temperatures recommended on the clothing label.
- **Place all used disposable gloves, facemasks, and other contaminated items in a lined container before disposing of them with other household waste.**
 - Clean your hands (with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer) immediately after handling these items.
 - Soap and water should be used preferentially if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Discuss any additional questions with your state or local health department or healthcare provider.**

SOURCE: This information is extracted from the CDC's guidance “Recommended Precautions for Household Members, Intimate Partners, and Caregivers in a Non-Healthcare Setting.”

