

Protecting yourself while caring for someone with COVID-19 and Other Tips!

To protect yourself while caring for someone with COVID-19, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) recommend:

- Keep your hands clean and away from your face. Frequently wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after being in close contact or in the same room as the sick person. If soap and water aren't available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- Consider using disposable gloves when handling items used by or contaminated by COVID-19.
- Wear a face mask if you need to be in the same room with the person who is ill.. Stay at least 6 feet away from the ill person. Don't touch or handle your mask while you are using it. *If your mask gets wet or dirty, replace it with a clean, dry mask.* Throw away the used mask and wash hands.
- Clean frequently. Every day, use household cleaning sprays or wipes to clean surfaces that are often touched, including counters, tabletops and doorknobs. Avoid cleaning the sick person's separate room and bathroom. Set aside bedding and utensils for the sick person only to use.
- Be careful with laundry. Don't shake dirty laundry. Use regular detergent to wash the sick person's laundry. Use the warmest setting you can. Wash your hands after putting clothes in the dryer. Thoroughly dry clothes. If you are handling clothing that has been soiled by the sick person, wear disposable gloves and keep the items away from your body. Wash your hands after removing the gloves. Place dirty gloves and masks in a waste bin with a lid in the sick person's room. Clean and disinfect clothes hampers and wash your hands afterward.
- Be careful with dishes. Wear gloves when handling dishes, cups or utensils used by the sick person. Wash the items with soap and hot water or in the dishwasher. Clean your hands after taking off the gloves or handling used items.
- Avoid direct contact with the sick person's bodily fluids. Wear disposable gloves and a face mask when providing oral and respiratory care and when handling stool, urine or other waste. Wash your hands before and after removing your gloves and mask. Don't reuse your mask or gloves.
- Avoid having unnecessary visitors in your home. Don't allow visitors until the sick person has completely recovered and has no signs or symptoms of COVID-19.

Looking for More Covid Advice and Information?

Coronavirus Self Check:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/coronavirus-self-checker.html>

The Pennsylvania Department of Health and Philadelphia Department of Public Health websites:

<https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/>

<https://www.phila.gov/programs/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/>

Testing Sites?

<https://www.phila.gov/programs/coronavirus-disease-2019-covid-19/testing-and-data/#/vue-app>

Covid tests are available at Sayre Health Center, 59th and Locust (at the back of Sayre high school)

Monday through Saturday beginning at 8:30 AM. The earlier you go, the quicker the service!

Those seeking a test should go IN PERSON! You'll complete paperwork and be tested. (Do not call for Sayre for an appointment. There will likely be a 5 - 6 day wait, plus 2 to 5 days for results to turn around.)

Rite Aid, CVS and other community services also provide tests. See what's available near you!

Ending isolation and Quarantine

Ask your doctor about when to end isolation, especially if you have a weakened immune system. The CDC recommends following guidelines for ending COVID-19 home isolation:

- If you don't have a test to see whether you're still contagious, you can leave your room or home if at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms started, at least 24 hours have passed with no fever (without the use of fever-reducing medicine) and other symptoms are improving. Loss of taste and smell might last for weeks or months after recovery but shouldn't delay ending isolation.
- If you are tested to determine if you're still contagious, your doctor can advise when you can be around others. Most people don't need testing to decide when they can be around others.

The CDC also recommends that, as the sick person's caregiver, you stay home for 14 days and watch for common signs and symptoms, such as fever, cough or shortness of breath.

- For more CDC advice, go to <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov>

Coping with caregiving stress

As you or your loved one recover, seek emotional support. Stay connected to others through texts, phone calls or videoconferences. Share your concerns. Avoid too much COVID-19 news. Rest and focus on enjoyable activities, such as reading, watching movies or playing online games.

As you take care of a loved one who is ill with COVID-19, you might feel stressed too. You might worry about your health and the health of the sick person. This can affect your ability to eat, sleep and concentrate, as well as worsen chronic health problems. It may also increase your use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.

St. James Support Services

The Saint James Wellness Center (Nurse Ayton), Student Family Support Services (Mr. Levi), Welcome Table (Ms Harris) and pastoral services (Father Kellner and Ms Nalubega), teachers and administration staff are all here to help. Call the school at 215-226-1276.

Remember to check our school website, stjamesphila.org for important community information as well as *Wellness Center handouts designed to help us with Stress and Emotional Regulation* worsened by the pandemic. *If you have a mental health condition, such as anxiety or depression, continue with your treatment. Contact your doctor or mental health professional if your condition worsens.*