

Protecting the Health of Your Household

Content objective: To support members in protecting the health of their households

Protecting Your Household

Providing patient care during the pandemic means you and your care team are at-risk for exposure. The list below has been compiled, in consultation with family physicians from across the county, to provide ideas to limit the risk presented to your family as you return home at the end of your workday.

Monitor your health:

- Per the CDC: check your temperature twice a day and remain alert for respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath, sore throat). If you develop symptoms contact your local or state health department and, if employed, your employer.

Prepare before going to work:

- Consider wearing scrubs every day. Always have a clean set ready to wear.
- If you wear a white coat wash it every day.
- Remove anything optional you typically wear (i.e., jewelry, ties, and watches).
- If you have medium or long hair, wear it pulled back.
- If you wear contacts, consider wearing glasses to decrease touching your face and to offer a barrier.
- Prepare clean clothes and shoes to change into after work. Take them with you if you can change at work.
- Remove nonessential items in your car and stock it with disinfecting wipes to make it easy to wipe down after traveling home.
- If taking mass transit, have hand sanitizer available. Touch as little as possible, use hand sanitizer after touching any surfaces.
- Keep a few pairs of exam gloves on you in case you need to touch surfaces as you travel to work. Be sure to carefully remove and dispose without contaminating yourself.

Before leaving work:

- If possible, shower and change into clean clothes and shoes.
- Put dirty clothes and shoes into a bag dedicated for soiled clothing. Consider using a cloth bag you can wash along with your dirty clothes each day.
- Wash hands or use hand sanitizer after removing work clothes and before touching clean clothes.

When you arrive home:

- Do not wear shoes from work into your home. Clean them, top and bottom with disinfecting wipes.

- If you were unable to change clothes before leaving work, change in an isolated location (i.e. garage, mudroom, laundry room).
- Wash clothes worn at work using your usual laundry detergent.
- Wash or safely discard dirty clothes bag.
- Wash hands after handling dirty clothes and shoes.
- Shower before interacting with your family.
- You may choose to isolate, if possible, from your family to limit their potential for exposure.
 - Identify a room and bathroom to be used exclusively by you. Have another family member leave needed food and items for you outside your isolation area so that you don't have to move throughout your home to meet your needs. Consider using disposable plates, cups, and utensils.
 - If you are unable to use separate spaces from your family, attempt to maintain six feet from others in your home and be sure to sleep alone.
- Assure your household is taking precautions to disinfect regularly:
 - Per the CDC: clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces in your home daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks.
 - Use disinfecting methods recommended by the CDC.
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/cleaning-disinfection.html>
 - If a member of your household is going to clean surfaces in the rooms you are using to isolate, they should wait to enter the room for 3.5 to 4 hours after you depart to allow the air to clear of potential contaminants and wear gloves for cleaning.