



# Employee Fact Sheet Series

## Preparing for isolation at home

We all need to be prepared for isolation, whether it's because of a personal positive COVID-19 test result, or because you're a household contact of a positive case.

When a household case is detected, you need to assume everyone in the home is infected until proven otherwise. Once a household case is detected, it's too late for any household member to go shopping for things you need.

So, whether you live alone, with a partner, with children, with parents and siblings, in a multi-generational family, or in a share house or apartment, here are some tips that will help you be ready if COVID-19 pays a visit.

### How to prepare

- If you are not already fully vaccinated, get the third dose (booster) of your COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you are eligible. [Book today](#)
- Check for symptoms regularly and [get tested](#) as soon as they develop.
- If you test positive, either via PCR or a rapid antigen test, you need to [complete the online COVID-19 Positive Notification Form](#). If you received a positive result using a RAT, you will also need to notify the Department of Health using their [COVID-19 Positive Rapid Antigen Test Self-Reporting Form](#).
- Ensure you have basic medical supplies such as a thermometer, pain relief and your regular medications available (see below for more information).
- Make sure you have enough face masks, hand sanitiser and disposable gloves. You can buy these from supermarkets, pharmacies, and various other stores, as well as online. It is also a good idea to buy adhesive strips to attach to gaps in doors.
- Think now about who can help with safely delivering supplies. Ask family, friends, neighbours, and colleagues in advance if they would be able to help if you need to isolate. You might also be able to ask community, school, and church groups or local social media hubs to help. Many fresh food shops also deliver. Make sure there is no face-to-face contact on delivery.
- Think about who you could call on to look after your children or people you care for if you are too unwell to do so, or if you need to go to hospital. Ask people in advance and keep their phone numbers handy – in hard copy as well as in your phone.

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- Plan for your pets – ensure they have enough food, medications, and a way to be exercised if you cannot leave the house.
- Keep your home well ventilated (windows open). Seal gaps around doors, especially if you live in an apartment. If you can smell your neighbour's cooking, it means you are breathing in air that could be carrying the virus. To do this you can use adhesive strips, which attach to the bottom of the door, or fabric door stops.
- Plan for safe transport to medical assistance or testing - can someone drive you if you are unwell?
- Isolation can be mentally tough. Plan for a buddy system and check in on each other by phone, email, text, or social media. It's often nice to see people's faces so video chats can be helpful.
- If you or a household member has a disability, have a plan for managing your disability and how to seek help. Inform carers or other supports if you are feeling unwell or unsafe.
- Have an emergency contact list with important phone numbers - including that of your GP. Give a hard copy of the list to everybody in the house and anybody who is supporting you. Don't rely on keeping the information in your phone.
- Remember that physical exercise can be good for your wellbeing. If you are feeling well, look for online classes that can help you take light exercise in your home.
- Plan home activities to keep you entertained, such as board games, podcasts, and books.

The most up to date advice on how isolate effectively at home can be found here

<https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/managing-covid-19-home>

### What do you need in your house?

- Rapid antigen tests
- Face masks
- Thermometer
- Hand sanitiser or liquid hand soap
- Disposable wipes
- Disposable medical gloves
- Pain relief – paracetamol or ibuprofen
- Your regular medications for at least a week. Your pharmacy may be able to deliver
- Specialised equipment if needed, such as wheelchair, glasses, hearing aids and batteries
- Oximeters (devices that measure oxygen levels in the blood) are useful for older people and those with underlying medical conditions. The [COVID Positive Pathways](#) can provide oximeters to people who meet the criteria
- If needed, nappies and baby formula for a week



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- Ensure you have enough food in the pantry and fridge. Ideally, prepare and freeze some nutritious meals
- Electronics, phone chargers and internet access.

### Managing your mental health

Being isolated can be challenging, but it can help if you:

- remind yourself that isolation is temporary, and helps others by reducing the spread of the virus
- stay in touch with family, friends and loved ones
- try to keep to regular sleep patterns
- try to eat healthy foods and stay hydrated. Plan meals, create a clean cooking space, and eat mindfully
- try to maintain physical activity if you are well enough
- establish an isolation routine, and focus on the benefits of this period of isolation
- use the time to try something new
- spend time outdoors if possible.

### Wellbeing resources

It is important to remember that support is always available to you, your loved ones, and colleagues.

Many wellbeing resources are available on the [COVID-19 website for employees](https://coronavirus.monashhealth.org/), which you can access from home: <https://coronavirus.monashhealth.org/>

On the wellbeing pages, you will find information on:

- the Employee Assistance Program
- the Be Well program
- your physical health
- emotional and mental health
- respectful relationships and family violence
- helpful organisations including [Beyond Blue](#)

#### [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)

Converge's EAP service is available for all Monash Health employees, immediate family members and volunteers. The program offers short-term, confidential counselling and coaching support in several areas. The EAP service is available 8am to 8pm, with limited availability on weekends. To find out more or to book an appointment visit the [Individual and team support webpage](#).

The offsite EAP service is available 8am to 8pm, with limited availability on weekends. To find out more or to book an appointment call 1300 687 327 or email [customerservice@convergeintl.com.au](mailto:customerservice@convergeintl.com.au)

#### [Digital Wellbeing Series](#)

The Digital Wellbeing Series by The Resilience Project is designed to provide practical and evidence-based strategies to help you manage your wellbeing at work and with family and friends.

The series includes 10x three-minute videos covering a range of topics including gratitude, empathy, sleep, and devices and offers an opportunity to learn more about self-care.

For more information and log in details visit the [Emotional and mental health webpage](#).



### Isolating with children

Isolating alone is one challenge; isolating with children and teenagers comes with other issues. Young people can be worried about being or getting sick, anxious about things ever 'returning to normal', concerned about schooling and work, and about friendships and relationships.

Young people aged 5 to 25 can call Kids Helpline for free, private and confidential phone and online counselling service 24 hours a day: 1800 55 1800. The website has some excellent resources and advice on [isolation](#).

### Further information from Monash Health

If you need further information about your furlough or return to work, call the Employee COVID-19 Hotline on 8572 5610, 7am to 8pm, seven days a week for advice.

Keep an eye on our <https://coronavirus.monashhealth.org/> webpage, Chief Executive Updates and iNews bulletins for the latest information.

### If symptoms develop

If you become symptomatic please attend one of the options for COVID testing for Monash Health employees: <https://coronavirus.monashhealth.org/employees/covid-testing/>

If more severe symptoms develop, you should seek medical advice by calling your GP or Nurse On Call on [1300 606 024](tel:1300606024) (available 24/7) or call the number provided to you by your care pathway or local health service.

If your health rapidly deteriorates or if it's an emergency, please immediately call triple zero ([000](tel:000)) or go straight to hospital. Make sure you tell them you have COVID-19.

### Other useful resources

Victorian Government Coronavirus information: <https://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/>

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19: <https://www.health.gov.au/health-alerts/covid-19/protect-yourself-and-others>

Coronavirus Symptom Checker: <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/apps-and-tools/healthdirect-coronavirus-covid-19-symptom-checker>

Beyond Blue: <https://coronavirus.beyondblue.org.au/>

Kids helpline: 1800 55 1800

