

5 STEPS

for Managing patients with COVID-19 at home: *For the Public*

Most COVID-19 cases are asymptomatic, mild, or moderate, and can be managed at home. If you have been in close contact with a COVID-19 positive person, or you are showing symptoms, and think you may have COVID-19, here's what you should do to take care of yourself, and when you might need to go to the hospital, explained in 5 simple steps.

1

Get to know all the symptoms of COVID-19 very well

Know the symptoms of COVID-19 very well. The symptoms are not all the same. Common symptoms are: fever, cough, sore throat, loss of taste or smell, red eyes, headache.

It is severe if you have breathing difficulties, you are unable to get out of bed or care for yourself, you have chest pains, or if you become confused, dizzy, or drowsy.

Get immediate help from a health care provider if you or someone you know has these severe symptoms.

If you have any COVID-19 symptoms, consult a health care provider, and get tested.

2

Take good care of yourself

Either you have symptoms or not, you need to:

- a. Rest very well, keep distance from other people, or live in a separate, well-ventilated room
- b. Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated
- c. Wear a mask if other people are in the same room with you
- d. Have a nutritious diet
- e. Take paracetamol when you have fever, muscle pain or headache (take advice from a health care provider on the dose and how often to take it). If fever continues despite this, use a cold wet cloth on your forehead.
- f. Check your oxygen level with a pulse oximeter this is advisable (ask your health care provider to show you how to do this and the meaning) (see steps 4 and 5 below).
- g. Do not self-medicate except for paracetamol for fever or muscle pain or headache
- h. If you have breathing difficulties, you are unable to get out of bed or care for yourself, you have chest pains, or if you become confused, dizzy, or drowsy, or the symptoms is getting worse, get immediate help from a health care provider

3

Protect people you live with

- a. Keep distance from others, in a separate, well-ventilated room, if possible, or at more than 1 metre
- b. Wear a mask, and have others in your household wear a mask.
- c. Wash your hands regularly with soap and water or use a hand sanitizer.
- d. Use separate utensils for food and drink.
- e. Seal and keep your waste, garbage separately and have it disposed separately.
- f. Ask your carer to wear a mask properly and wash his/her hands regularly with soap and water or hand sanitizer.
- g. Open your windows to improve ventilation.

4

The use of pulse oximeter

- a. Make sure you know how to use it safely: your health care provider should tell you how to use it and the meaning of the values.
- b. Check your oxygen level with a pulse oximeter 3 times a day, or as advised by your health care provider
- c. Record the values gotten from the pulse oximeter and follow step 5.

5

Understand your oxygen level. Here, are some important things to know::

Whatever your level of oxygen, if you have breathing difficulties, you are unable to get out of bed or care for yourself, you have chest pains, or if you become confused, dizzy, or drowsy, get immediate help from a health care provider.

For your oxygen level, here are what to know when using the pulse oximeter:

- a. If your oxygen level is 94% or above, continue to check your oxygen level as before
- b. If your oxygen level is 90% or more, but less than 94%:
 - i. Consult a health care provider or go to the health facility for care as soon as possible
 - ii. In case you must wait to be taken to a health facility, rotating yourself in bed may help, including on your stomach, on your side, and sitting upright, if you are able to, for up to 2 hours at a time may help
- c. If your oxygen level is less than 90%, this is severe COVID-19:

Consult a health care provider and seek hospital care immediately. This is an emergency.

