

Self-Care Guide - COVID-19

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus recover in about 2 weeks without special medical attention. So, in most cases, you can practise self-care at home.

Managing symptoms in adults

Rest: You probably feel weak and tired. While rest will help you fight the disease, it's not good to stay in bed all the time. Resume your normal activities as soon as you're up to it, but you must complete your isolation period even if you're feeling better.

Hydrate: This is especially important if you have a fever, which can cause you to sweat and lose fluids. The recommended daily intake is 1.5 litres a day of cold or lukewarm fluids, as you prefer. Avoid alcoholic beverages or those containing caffeine, such as coffee, tea, or soft drinks, as they can increase urine output and fluid loss.

Take medication to relieve discomfort: You can take over-the-counter medications (if you have no contraindications) to relieve fever, muscle aches, headaches, and other symptoms. Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) is preferable, but non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (Advil® and Motrin®) are also safe. Avoid taking products with the same ingredients, such as Tylenol® and TylenolSinus®, at the same time. Be sure to continue taking your usual medications as well. Contact your pharmacist if you have questions about how over-the-counter medications might interact with your prescriptions.

Use home remedies to ease symptoms:

- **For a sore throat:** Suck on ice cubes or non-medicated lozenges, gargle with salt water (½ tsp salt in 250 ml of warm water), eat soft, cold foods like yogurt, cottage cheese, and ice cream.
- **For a stuffy or runny nose:** Use saline solution to thin out the mucus discharge. Note that decongestants and saline solution are ineffective against loss of smell.
- **Prop yourself up to quiet a persistent cough so you can sleep better.**

Managing symptoms in children

Encourage your child to rest: They most likely feel weak and tired. Rest will help them fight the disease. They can resume their normal activities as soon as they're up to it, but they must complete their isolation period even if they're feeling better.

Encourage them to hydrate: This is especially important if they have a fever, which can cause them to sweat and lose fluids. They can drink cold or lukewarm fluids, as they prefer. If your child shows signs of dehydration due to vomiting and diarrhea, for example, you can give them a rehydration solution sold in pharmacies, like Pedialyte®.

If they are older than 3 months, give them medication to relieve discomfort: Over-the-counter medication can be used to relieve fever or pain. Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) is preferable, but non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (Advil® and Motrin®) may also be an option in certain situations. It's best to contact a healthcare professional before giving your child an anti-inflammatory. Continue giving them their usual medications as well. Contact your pharmacist if you have questions about how over-the-counter medications might interact with their prescriptions.

Use home remedies to ease symptoms:

- For a sore throat: If your child is over **4 years old**, they can suck on ice cubes or non-medicated lozenges. They can also gargle with salt water (½ tsp salt in 250 ml of lukewarm water). Give them cold, soft foods like yogurt, cottage cheese, and ice cream.
- For a stuffy or runny nose: Use saline solution to thin out the mucus discharge. Note that decongestants and saline solution are ineffective against loss of smell.
- Prop them up to quiet a persistent cough so they can sleep better.

In all cases

- Follow isolation recommendations.
- Wash hands often.
- Avoid sharing personal items (drinking glasses, dishes, etc.).
- Keep the house tidy.
- Monitor symptoms and watch for changes in condition.
- Regularly air out your home and room by opening a window (weather permitting).

Not sure if you should see a healthcare provider? See the document “Do I need to consult in the context of COVID-19?”.

If you have other health questions or experience unusual symptoms, call the **Info-Santé hotline at 811**. A nurse will assess you and tell you what to do.

Also call the hotline if you are pregnant, immunocompromised, or have a specific health problem, as you may need a consultation faster.

For more information, visit
[Quebec.ca/coronavirus](https://quebec.ca/coronavirus).