

# How to Self-Isolate

## A GUIDE FOR EMPLOYEES

If you have recently returned from a destination in which the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) is circulating or if you have been in contact with someone who has the virus, you will be asked to self-isolate and monitor your symptoms for 14 days before returning to work or campus. Columbia University is here to support you as you navigate this period of uncertainty. Please work directly with your supervisor on academic and research continuity.

Hearing that you need to self-isolate and disconnect from others may be disconcerting, but the goal is to ensure that you are healthy, while also protecting others from exposure to illness.

### WHAT TO HAVE ON HAND

Some people may self-isolate in their own room or residence; others may need to relocate. In some circumstances, individuals may self-isolate together. During this time, you will want to have enough clean clothes for the entire 14-day period, as well as a pillow and blanket, your cell phone, and laptop. You'll also need a toiletry kit, eyewear, and any prescription and non-prescription medications.

### YOUR SELF-CARE KIT

Be prepared with a self-care kit that contains:

- Digital thermometer (for daily use)
- Hand sanitizer (for times you can't wash)
- Alcohol wipes (for cleaning, as needed)
- Water bottle (stay hydrated!)
- Temperature and symptom log (see next page)

### WHAT TO WATCH FOR...

Symptoms related to COVID-19 include:

- Fever (above 100.4°F)
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

In more severe cases, infection can cause pneumonia and other complications, especially for older individuals and those with other health conditions.

### MONITORING YOUR SYMPTOMS DURING SELF-ISOLATION

Please take your temperature daily and record your symptoms on the health log located on the next page. **If you develop symptoms or need medical triage/help while in self-isolation, please call your primary care provider who will determine if you should leave the premises to seek medical attention.**

### WHILE YOU'RE IN SELF-ISOLATION

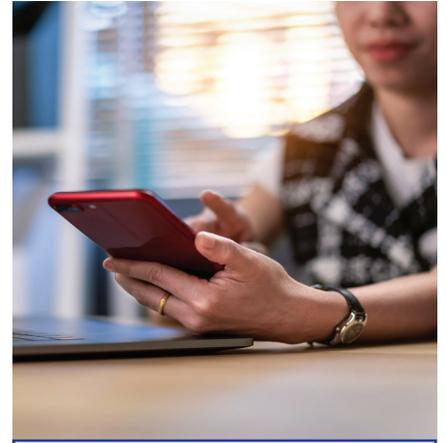
To the extent possible, remain at home for the 14-day period. You should avoid crowds, limit public activities, and practice social distancing. This means:

- Do not go out, except when recommended by a medical professional.
- Do not use public transportation.
- Maintain distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others.

If you must leave your home, try to do so during off-hours and avoid places where people are congregating.

### COMMUNICATION WITH FAMILY

Your personal health information is confidential. You will need to sign a release before our staff will be able to speak with your parents or other family members or friends.



### SUPPORT IS A PHONE CALL OR CLICK AWAY

You are a valued member of the Columbia community, and your health and well-being are important to us. We are here to assist you if you need help.

**Columbia Health**  
212-854-9355  
(available 24/7)

**Employee Assistance Program**  
[humana.com/eap](http://humana.com/eap)  
username: Columbia  
Password: eap

**Public Safety**  
212-854-5555  
(available 24/7)

**Columbia COVID-19 Website**  
[columbia.edu/coronavirus](http://columbia.edu/coronavirus)

If you feel you need immediate treatment of very serious or critical conditions, call 911.

If you decide to go to the emergency department on your own, if possible call the ER prior to your arrival so they can be prepared to potentially isolate you when you arrive.

## PUBLIC HEALTH TERMINOLOGY

When communicable infections circulate, communities try to reduce the spread in several ways, depending on the severity of the illness, the ease of transmission, and the local and national policies of the time. Often, more than one method is employed during an outbreak.

**Self-isolation** refers to the guidance for individuals to stay home and monitor their health following travel to a high-risk country.

**Isolation** prevents the spread of an infectious disease by separating people who are already sick from those who are not. It lasts as long as the disease is contagious.

**Quarantine** separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. Quarantines are typically used for individuals who are at high risk of exposure to COVID-19—particularly those who have had close contact with someone confirmed to have COVID-19 without using recommended precautions for caregivers.

**Social distancing** means avoiding crowds and public transportation (e.g., bus, subway, taxi, ride share), and maintaining distance (approximately 6 feet or 2 meters) from others.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

[columbia.edu/coronavirus](https://columbia.edu/coronavirus)

## COMMON FEELINGS

Everyone reacts differently to stressful situations that require changes in location or behavior. When you're out of circulation, you may experience a range of feelings, including:

- Anxiety, worry, or fear related to your health status or that of others
- Anger or resentment at the inconvenience
- Worry about not having your things with you or not doing your usual routine
- Uncertainty or concern about how long you will need to remain in this situation
- Excitement to have some alone time to rest and catch up on reading
- Loneliness or feeling cut off
- Boredom and frustration
- Sadness or depression
- Symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder

**Please contact your mental health care provider or the Employee Assistance Program if you need immediate counseling care.**

## Your Daily Health Log

*Please record your temperature once or twice daily, and write down any symptoms or concerns.*

DAY	DATE	AM TEMP (°F)	PM TEMP (°F)	SYMPTOMS (COUGH, SHORTNESS OF BREATH, ETC.)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				

*If your temperature is >100.4°F, or if you feel like you have a fever, and you have a cough or shortness of breath, call the Columbia Health at 212-854-9355 to discuss symptoms. Note: COVID-19 symptoms and some cold/flu symptoms can be similar. Please consult with Columbia Health right away.*