

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

Northern Region

Interim Health Professional Home Visit Guideline

Version 5. 14/04/2020

Note: This is interim advice and may change in the future as viral transmission risks are better understood.



Does the visit need to take place? Consider alternative options such as telehealth.

YES

Phone client before visit, asking whether the client or household member:

- Is a suspected, probable or confirmed case of COVID-19
- Is unwell with acute respiratory symptoms including cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, coryza (runny nose) or temporary loss of smell with or without fever

YES

Check that the client or symptomatic household member has contacted Healthline or their GP
If an appointment or home visit is necessary, staff should:

- Advise the client that you may be wearing PPE

During the visit:

- Maintain physical distancing from client and household members (remain more than 2m)
- Perform hand hygiene
- If you need to be in <2m contact with the client (for example to provide clinical care) **you should adhere to standard, contact and droplet precautions i.e. surgical mask, gown, gloves, eye protection.**
- Reinforce cough, sneeze and hand hygiene with the client.
- Dispose of PPE safely

NO

If an appointment or home visit is necessary, staff should:

- Advise the client that you will be taking extra precautions to protect them, which may include wearing a mask (to protect both them and you)

During the visit:

- Maintain physical distancing (remain more than 2m)
- Perform hand hygiene
- If you need to be in <2m contact with the client, for example to provide clinical care, you should **adhere to standard precautions and wear a surgical mask**
- Reinforce cough, sneeze and hand hygiene with the client.
- Dispose of PPE safely

It is important that you use and dispose of a face mask properly. The instructions on the correct use of a face mask, and an explanation of standard precautions are included on the next page.

It may be harder for clients to hear or understand you if you are wearing a mask, please take extra care when communicating.

If the client or family have any questions at any time please:
Refer them to the dedicated coronavirus line 0800 3585453 or to phone their GP.

You can find more information about self isolation on the Ministry of Health website. Just search MOH Coronavirus self isolation.

Standard precautions

Standard precautions are a set of infection prevention and control practices used to prevent transmission of diseases that can be acquired by contact with blood, body fluids, non-intact skin and mucous membranes.

Standard precautions should be used for all patient care activities. They're based on a risk assessment and make use of common-sense practices and personal protective equipment use that protect healthcare workers from infection and prevent the spread of infection from patient to patient.

Standard precautions include:

1. hand hygiene
2. use of personal protective equipment (eg, gloves, masks, eyewear)
3. respiratory hygiene / cough etiquette
4. patient placement
5. safe handling of needles and other sharps
6. safe injection practices (ie, aseptic technique for parenteral medications)
7. sterile instruments and devices
8. safe handling of linen and laundry
9. cleaning and disinfection of environmental surfaces.

Wearing a surgical face mask

It is important that face masks are worn and removed correctly. Masks should fit snugly and fully cover your nose and mouth.

How to wear a mask:

- place over nose, mouth and chin
- fit flexible nose piece over nose bridge
- secure on head with ties or elastic
- adjust to fit – secure on your head, fitting snugly around your face with no gaps
- avoid touching or adjusting your mask during use.

How to remove a mask:

- avoid touching the front of the mask
- if the mask has ties, untie the bottom, then top tie
- remove from face
- discard, do not use again
- wash hands with soap and water or use hand sanitiser immediately.

Masks can be worn until they are damp and at most for 4 hours. They should be removed prior to eating and drinking or if they become soiled, and discarded.