



STRATEGIES TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19 IN LONG-TERM CARE FACILITIES (LTCF)

The general strategies CDC recommends to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in LTCF are the same strategies these facilities use every day to detect and prevent the spread of other respiratory viruses like influenza.

Long-term care facilities concerned that a resident, visitor, or employee may have COVID-19 please contact your local health department immediately for consultation and guidance.

Prevent the introduction of respiratory germs INTO your facility:

- Post signs at the entrance instructing visitors not to visit if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- Ensure sick leave policies allow employees to stay home if they have symptoms of respiratory infection.
- Assess residents' symptoms of respiratory infection upon admission to the facility and implement appropriate infection prevention practices for incoming symptomatic residents.

Symptoms of respiratory infection, including COVID-19:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath



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Health Department

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Prevent the spread of respiratory germs **WITHIN** your facility

- Keep residents and employees informed.
 - Describe what actions the facility is taking to protect them, including answering their questions and explaining what they can do to protect themselves and their fellow residents.
- Monitor residents and employees for fever or respiratory symptoms.
 - Restrict residents with fever or acute respiratory symptoms to their room. If they must leave the room for medically necessary procedures, have them wear a face mask (if tolerated).
 - In general, for care of residents with undiagnosed respiratory infection use Standard, Contact, and Droplet Precautions with eye protection unless suspected diagnosis requires Airborne Precautions (e.g., tuberculosis).
 - Healthcare personnel should monitor their local and state public health sources to understand COVID-19 activity in their community to help inform their evaluation of individuals with unknown respiratory illness. If there is transmission of COVID-19 in the community, in addition to implementing the precautions described above for residents with acute respiratory infection, facilities should also consult with public health authorities for additional guidance.
- Support hand and respiratory hygiene, as well as cough etiquette by residents, visitors, and employees.
 - Ensure employees clean their hands according to CDC guidelines, including before and after contact with residents, after contact with contaminated surfaces or equipment, and after removing personal protective equipment (PPE).
 - Put alcohol-based hand rub in every resident room (ideally both inside and outside of the room).
 - Make sure tissues are available and any sink is well-stocked with soap and paper towels for hand washing.
- Identify dedicated employees to care for COVID-19 patients and provide infection control training.
 - Guidance on implementing recommended infection prevention practices is available in CDC's free online course which includes resources and checklists for facilities and employees to use: The Nursing Home Infection Preventionist Training: <https://www.cdc.gov/longtermcare/training.html>
- Provide the right supplies to ensure easy and correct use of PPE.
 - Post signs on the door or wall outside of the resident room that clearly describe the type of precautions needed and required PPE.
 - Make PPE, including face masks, eye protection, gowns, and gloves, available immediately outside of the resident room.
 - Position a trash can near the exit inside any resident room to make it easy for employees to discard PPE.

Prevent the spread of respiratory germs **BETWEEN** facilities

- Notify facilities prior to transferring a resident with an acute respiratory illness, including suspected or confirmed COVID-19, to a higher level of care.
- Report any possible COVID-19 illness in residents and employees to the local health department, including your state HAI/AR coordinator.

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