

## Visiting a Loved One in a Nursing Home? Tips for a Safe Visit

COVID-19 is still circulating in Virginia, and outbreaks continue to occur in long-term care and other congregate settings. If you are visiting a loved one who is a resident in a nursing home this holiday season, there are steps you can take to protect yourself and your loved one.

**DO NOT ENTER** the facility if you:

- Have a **positive viral test** for COVID-19 or
- **Symptoms** of COVID-19 or
- Currently **meet the criteria for quarantine** (*close contact with someone who has COVID-19, unless you have been fully vaccinated*)

The Virginia Department of Health (VDH) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) strongly encourage all visitors to become **vaccinated** for COVID-19. The following precautions can help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and other infections such as flu and norovirus that may also be circulating this time of year.

### During your visit:

- Perform **hand hygiene** frequently, including before and after your visit.
- Keep your **mask\*** on during your visit, covering your mouth and nose.
- Maintain **physical distance\*** (at least 6 feet between people).
- Follow facility guidance regarding where to have the visit:
  - *If you and/or your loved one are not fully vaccinated, outdoor visitation is preferred if possible.*
  - During indoor visitation:
    - Limit your movement within the facility. Go directly to your loved one's room or designated visitation area.
    - If your loved one's roommate is unvaccinated or immunocompromised (regardless of vaccination status), it is best to conduct the visit somewhere other than your loved one's room, if possible.
- If visiting a unit that is caring for individuals with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 or your loved one has suspected or confirmed COVID-19 (including being in quarantine due to recent exposure):
  - Be aware you are assuming **risk of contracting COVID-19**.
  - Perform **hand hygiene** before and after the visit.
  - Wear appropriate **personal protective equipment** (surgical mask, gown, gloves). Follow staff guidance for how to put on and take off PPE.
  - **Limit surfaces touched** while inside the room.
  - **Limit your movement** within the facility.
  - Maintain **physical distance** while inside the room.
  - After the visit, **monitor yourself** for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days. Follow public health guidance regarding quarantine following COVID-19 exposure, as appropriate.

\*Wearing a mask and keeping physical distance is the **safest practice**, even if you are vaccinated and COVID-19 transmission is low in the community.

Note: [CMS Nursing Home Visitation Guidance for COVID-19](#) was revised on 11/12/2021; visitation is now allowed for all residents at all times.