

For Clients Receiving Care and Household Members

Help prevent the spread of viral respiratory illnesses.

January 14, 2025

Before each visit, all clients and household members must self-screen for Viral Respiratory Illness (VRI) symptoms.



- Conduct a self-check for VRI symptoms prior to each home health visit.
- Inform your health care provider in advance if you or a household member are feeling sick or have VRI symptoms (i.e., fever or chills, new or worsening cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, vomiting, or diarrhea).

If you or a household member have VRI symptoms:



- Stay home and self-isolate.
- Follow your health care provider's advice to reduce the risk of spread.
- If you can, wear a mask when you have VRI symptoms and cannot maintain distance from others; or while providing care to someone who has symptoms.
- Individual(s) in a household with VRI symptoms should use one dedicated room and bathroom, if possible.
- Avoid non-essential visitors to the home when you have VRI symptoms. It is okay for people to drop off food and necessities outside the home.
- Avoid sharing personal hygiene and other household items, including towels, food, drinks, and utensils.
- Shared spaces (e.g., bathrooms) should be cleaned and disinfected after use by people with VRI symptoms.

All clients, household members, and visitors must practice diligent hand and respiratory hygiene.

HAND HYGIENE



- Clean your hands before and after a visit.
- Use alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.
 - Use soap and water if hands are visibly soiled.
- Antibacterial soap is NOT needed.
- Clean your hands:
 - Before putting on a mask and after taking it off.
 - After caring for a sick person.
 - After handling blood, body fluids, bedpans, urinals, wound dressings, waste, or dirty laundry.
 - Any other time your hands are potentially contaminated.

RESPIRATORY HYGIENE



- Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your bent elbow.
- Throw away used tissues immediately and clean your hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth with unwashed hands.

MEDICAL MASKS



For clients receiving care:

- You may choose to wear a mask while receiving home health care services, but this is not required except if asked to wear one by your health care provider (e.g., if you have VRI symptoms).

For household members:

- Respect personal space during the visit (e.g., if possible, stay in another part of the home).
- If involved in client care, you may choose to wear a mask when near the client or the health care provider.

CLEANING AND DISINFECTION



- Use common, store-bought cleaning and disinfection products.
- Regularly clean and disinfect surfaces in the home, particularly your care area and bathroom.
- Highly touched surfaces (e.g., counters, door handles, light switches, phones) should be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Any surface that is visibly dirty or contaminated with body fluids should be cleaned and disinfected immediately.

WASTE MANAGEMENT



- Put a plastic-lined garbage bin next to the exit door for use by the health care provider to dispose of masks and other PPE.
- Throw away garbage as per usual (i.e., close the garbage bag securely without touching the waste), following local or municipal regulations.
- Perform hand hygiene after handling waste.