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Department of Public Health
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For CLOSE CONTACT of confirmed case of COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus): Staff

PLEASE NOTE: Because the COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) is a new virus in the human population, new information is becoming available as doctors and scientists study the virus and how it affects people. While the information contained in this pack was accurate at the time it was printed, we advise you to check the **HSE website at www.hse.ie / Health Protection Surveillance Centre www.hpsc.ie** for the most up-to-date information. The website is updated frequently as new information about the virus becomes available.

05/03/2020



As you have been in close contact with a case of COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus), please find information and instructions from the Department of Public Health, HSE-South for follow-up below.

What is a coronavirus?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that can cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

What is my risk?

Coronaviruses can be transmitted from person-to-person, usually after close contact with an infected patient (for example in a household, workplace or health care setting). Because it is likely that you have had close contact with someone who has COVID-19, there is a risk that you might have picked up the virus and could become unwell or pass the virus on to other people.

What happens next?

1. Please read this letter and the enclosed information leaflet carefully.
2. **You will be contacted daily by the Department of Public Health over a set period by text or by phone.**
3. **They will ask you whether you have any symptoms (see below).**

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms of COVID-19 infection can include any of the following:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing

4. If you have or develop any of the symptoms above during this time:

- a. Please immediately **put on one of the surgical masks provided in this pack** and **isolate yourself from others** (for example: stay in a different room from the rest of your family with the door closed).
- b. Once you are isolated from others you may remove the surgical mask. If you need to come in contact with other people for any reason **please put on a surgical mask before contact**.
- c. **Call your GP** and ask to speak to one of our doctors or nurses. They will discuss your symptoms with you and advise you what the next steps you need to take are, including arranging testing for the virus.
- d. If it is outside of hours please contact an out of hours GP service, clearly say that you are **a close contact with exposure to Novel Coronavirus** and tell them your symptoms.
- e. **Do not attend** your local Emergency Department unless told to do so by a doctor.
- f. **Do not attend** your GP, including their out-of-hours/on-call service unless told to do so by a doctor.

5. During the time that you are being monitored:

- a. You should limit your social interactions in so far as possible.
- b. You should not attend work/college/school.
- c. You should not travel outside Ireland.
- d. In particular, you should avoid contact with immunocompromised, elderly, pregnant or other vulnerable individuals.
- e. You should avoid attendance at any social gatherings, crowded closed settings, healthcare, childcare or school settings during the period of active monitoring. This includes rescheduling any non-urgent medical appointments.
- f. Please discuss travel within Ireland with the Department of Public Health, preferably two days before intended travel and advise us of your location and contact details.
- g. You need to remain contactable by phone by the Department of Public Health

6. You should always engage in regular hand washing and cover your mouth and nose with a tissue, or the bend of your elbow, when coughing and sneezing to prevent the spread of infection. See advice enclosed '*Recommendations to prevent the spread of infection*'.

We thank you in advance for your continued cooperation. If you are concerned, please call the Department of Public Health at the number below.

Further information, including Frequently Asked Questions, is available on the HSE website www.hse.ie and on the Health Protection Surveillance Centre's website www.hpsc.ie

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Deirdre Murray
Specialist in Public Health Medicine
MCRN: 011936

Contact Phone Number

Daily, including weekends, between 8am-8pm: 021-4927601

Recommendations to prevent the spread of infection

- Try to avoid touching your mouth and nose
- Regular **hand washing (Figure 1)**. You should wash your hands:
 - ✓ after coughing or sneezing
 - ✓ before and after you prepare food
 - ✓ before eating
 - ✓ after using the toilet
 - ✓ when caring for the sick
 - ✓ when hands are visibly dirty
 - ✓ after handling animals or animal waste
- Use soap and running water to wash your hands (Figure 1)
- **Respiratory hygiene (Figure 2)**: Cover your mouth and nose with a clean tissue when coughing and/or sneezing and then promptly dispose of the tissue in a bin. If you do not have a clean tissue, cough or sneeze into the bend of your elbow instead. Wash your hands immediately after sneezing, coughing or blowing your nose.
- Avoid close contact with anyone showing signs of respiratory illness such as coughing or sneezing.
- **Cleaning and disinfection of the environment**:
Clean surfaces, especially the most frequently touched surfaces, with any cleaning product, then disinfect with a disinfectant.
- **Waste disposal**: Dispose of household waste as you normally would. Used tissues can be disposed of in your normal household bin.

Figure 1: How to Handwash

How to Handwash?

WASH HANDS WHEN VISIBLY SOILED! OTHERWISE, USE HANDRUB



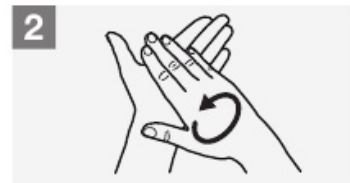
Duration of the entire procedure: 40-60 seconds



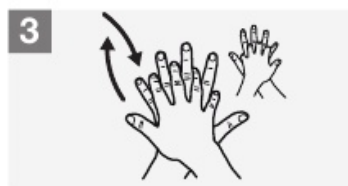
Wet hands with water;



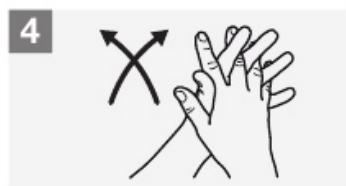
Apply enough soap to cover all hand surfaces;



Rub hands palm to palm;



Right palm over left dorsum with interlaced fingers and vice versa;



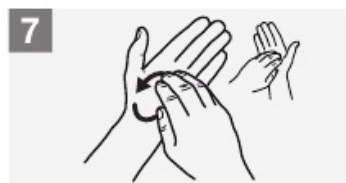
Palm to palm with fingers interlaced;



Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked;



Rotational rubbing of left thumb clasped in right palm and vice versa;



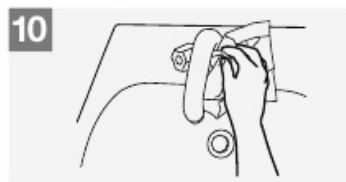
Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa;



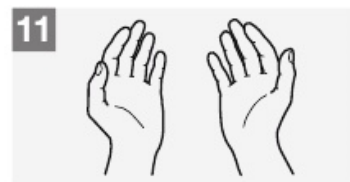
Rinse hands with water;



Dry hands thoroughly with a single use towel;



Use towel to turn off faucet;



Your hands are now safe.



World Health Organization

Patient Safety

A World Alliance for Safer Health Care

SAVE LIVES

Clean Your Hands

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May 2009

Figure 2: Respiratory Hygiene

COVER UP

COUGHING AND SNEEZING

- Turn your head away from others
- Use a tissue to cover your nose and mouth

- Drop your tissue into a waste bin

- No tissues? Use your sleeve

- Clean your hands after discarding tissue using soap and water or alcohol gel for at least 15 seconds