Guidance for Students Who May Have Been Exposed to COVID-19

Introduction

You have been identified as someone who may have been exposed to COVID-19. You must now self-quarantine immediately and take the following actions. Self-quarantine means staying home, monitoring your health, and maintaining social distancing (at least 6 feet) from others at all times. If you need to be around other people or animals in or outside of the home, wear a cloth face covering.

There are several important steps you must take now. Details of each step are described below:

2. Notify your professors/supervisors you are sick and will not be reporting to class/work. **You do not need to tell them if your COVID-19 test was positive.**
3. Monitor symptoms/Seek medical care immediately for any serious symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest discomfort or feeling faint.
4. Contact the Colonial Health Center (CHC) if you need medical assistance, 202-994-5300.
5. Schedule a COVID-19 test immediately and another for 4 days after (day 5) from your last exposure to a positive COVID-19 case (day 1).
6. Ending your quarantine.

**Step 1: Begin to Self-Quarantine**

While you are in quarantine, a hold will be placed on your GWorld card restricting your access to campus spaces. Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent the spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. We recommend that you maintain quarantine for 14 days, self-monitor your symptoms, and speak with a health care provider if any symptoms develop.

Steps to Quarantine:

- You will need to quarantine in your dorm/home and monitor yourself for symptoms. Regardless of your test results, the safest course of action is to remain in self-quarantine for 14 days, unless a provider clears you to return to campus (see *Ending Quarantine* below for more details).
- For students who live with other people, stay in a specific room and away from other people and use a separate bathroom, if available. Restrict contact with pets and other animals while you are sick. More guidelines for quarantining in your home or dorm where you live with others can be found here: [Living in Shared Housing](#).
- Avoid contact with others and prohibit visitors who do not have an essential need to be in your home.
- Wear a facemask when you are around other people (e.g., sharing a room or vehicle) or pets, and before you enter a healthcare provider’s office. If you are short of breath when wearing a mask, then people who live with you should wear a face covering if they are in the same room as you.
- Clean your hands often: wash with soap and water, at least 20 seconds, or (less preferable, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry).
- Wash hands especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can and clean your hands immediately.
- Clean and disinfect your space, especially any shared areas such as bathrooms and kitchens. More details can be found here: [Cleaning And Disinfecting Your Home](#).
- For additional quarantine guidance, please see [the CDC's Quarantine Instructions](#).

**Step 2: Notify Your Professors and/or Supervisors**

As you would for any illness which would keep you out of school/work, you should notify your professors/supervisors that you are sick and will not be reporting to class/work. **You do not need to tell them about your COVID-19 status.** The Division for Student Affairs and the GW CARE teams have created a

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Student Support Team tasked with the support and response to students in quarantine. The GW CARES Team will reach out to you to provide support with basic needs such as grocery and essential package delivery and communicating with professors should you run into issues.

**Step 3: Contact the Colonial Health Center (CHC) if you need medical assistance, 202-994-5300**

CHC can be reached by calling 202-994-5300. When you call, they will do a screening for any symptoms you may have that could be from COVID-19. They can provide medical care for you by tele-health if needed and provide any follow up care or testing recommended by their providers.

**Step 4: Monitor Yourself for Symptoms**

Symptoms of COVID-19 may include the following: fever (subjective or 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit), chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea, or otherwise feeling unwell.

- CCST will enroll you in a daily email symptom screen to assist in monitoring you until you are cleared to return to campus.
- **Call CHC or seek immediate medical care for severe or worrisome symptoms** such as difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face.

**Treat your Symptoms:**
- There is no known cure for COVID-19 infection. Treatment is supportive.
- Hydrate well.
- Control your fever. Use acetaminophen (e.g., Tylenol) if possible. Avoid Advil, Motrin, Ibuprofen or Aleve.
- Rest.
- Stay well nourished.

**Step 5: Schedule Two COVID-19 Tests**

You will need to schedule two tests for COVID-19 at [https://mychc.gwu.edu](https://mychc.gwu.edu). The first test should be as soon as possible while the second should be 4 days after (day 5) your last exposure to a positive COVID case (day 1). However, if you develop symptoms, do not wait the 5 days and schedule a test for COVID-19 as soon as possible at [https://mychc.gwu.edu](https://mychc.gwu.edu).

Based on the results of your CHC consultation and COVID-19 test result, one of the following will occur.

1. If your test result is positive for COVID-19, then you have been infected with the virus that causes COVID-19. You will then immediately begin self-isolation, per [DC Health’s](https://dcpmhb.dc.gov/page/coronavirus-resource-center), [Virginia DOH’s](https://www.doh.virginia.gov/), or [Maryland DOH’s](https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/) isolation instructions. The GW Campus COVID-19 Support Team (CCST) will contact you to discuss your positive result, to facilitate communication with the GW CARE team, and to coordinate your clinical care with CHC.
2. If your test result is negative for COVID-19, see Step 6 for Ending Quarantine.

**Step 6: Ending Quarantine**

Based on DC Health guidance, CCST will end quarantine 10 days after exposure (on day 11). We recommend that you maintain quarantine for 14 days as the safest course of action.

**Only CCST can end your quarantine. You may not take yourself out of quarantine.**

**Supporting You in Quarantine:**

The Division for Student Affairs has created a Student Support Team tasked with the support and response to students who either test positive for COVID-19 or are identified as an individual who was in close contact with someone who tests positive for COVID-19. The team will support students living on campus.

- The Colonial Health Center:
Telehealth services are available via phone and Zoom video with CHC providers including:
- Counseling and psychological services
- Medical services
- Psychiatry services

- The GW CARE Team will reach out to you to provide support with basic needs such as grocery and essential package delivery and communicating with professors should you run into issues.
- While in quarantine, please communicate with your professors to ensure you can stay up to date with lessons and work.

Contact Information:
- Colonial Health Center: 202-994-5300
- Medical Emergencies:
  - On campus, GWU Police: 202-994-6111
  - Off campus, DC Police: 911
- GW CARE Team: gwcares@gwu.edu
- Campus COVID-19 Support Team: ccst@gwu.edu (please include your GWID in all messages)

Additional Resources:
- If medications are needed there are pharmacies located near the Foggy Bottom and Mount Vernon Campus.
  - Foggy Bottom: The CVS at 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue - 202-296-0329
  - Mount Vernon: The CVS at 4859 MacArthur Boulevard - 202-965-6548
  - You may request medications from any pharmacy, and some may provide delivery service.
  - For more information, please see CVS same-day delivery.
- Food:
  - Whole Foods Foggy Bottom, GrubHub, Uber Eats, Safeway offer grocery delivery services if you are in quarantine.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is quarantine?** Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.

2. **How is quarantine different from isolation?** While “quarantine” and “isolation” are often used interchangeably, they mean different things. “Quarantine” is used when a person has potentially been exposed to an illness and needs to separate from other people to see if they develop symptoms and become sick. “Isolation” is used when someone has symptoms or is confirmed to have an illness. See Quarantine vs. Isolation.

3. **How long does quarantine last?** We recommend that you maintain quarantine for 14 days as the safest course of action. You will remain in quarantine for 10 days and may end quarantine if you do not develop symptoms of COVID-19 at any point during quarantine and you continue to self-monitor for symptoms until 14 days after the last exposure. However, if you develop symptoms during your quarantine, please speak with the Colonial Health Center to discuss your specific situation. See When to Quarantine.

4. **Am I allowed to have contact with others/have visitors?** Unfortunately, you cannot visit others or have visitors due to the risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19. We encourage you to stay connected through phone calls and video chats.

5. **What are my options for food and dining while in quarantine?** The GW CARES Team will reach out to you to provide support with grocery deliveries. You can also order food to your residence hall.

6. **How can I get essential items I need while in quarantine?** The GW CARES Team will provide delivery of essential packages for students in quarantine. Please discuss this with them when they call.

For more COVID-19 information, check out the CDC's COVID-19 Factsheet.

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References:
COVID-19: When to Quarantine
What to do if you are sick
Case Investigation and Contact Tracing: Part of a Multipronged Approach to Fight the COVID-19 Pandemic

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