

Omicron update  
February 2022

# Mission Bay Doctors

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*This guide contains information on how to manage COVID-19 infection at home*

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Dear Mission Bay Doctors patients and families

Many people will become infected with the omicron variant of COVID-19 in the coming months.

COVID-19 infection will not cause illness in everybody.

Thanks to our high rates of vaccination, most people will experience mild or no symptoms. These people can manage safely at home.

A few people may experience severe illness. It is important to recognise signs of severe illness and know when to get help.

This guide contains information on what to do if you, or a family member, tests positive for COVID-19.

## I've tested positive. What happens now?



### Step 1: Isolation

If you test positive for COVID-19, the first step is to isolate at home (or in other suitable accommodation). Make sure you have your phone with you at all time and answer any calls.

Currently, you must isolate for at least **14 days** while you recover from COVID-19 and until you are symptom-free for 72 hours.

The recommended isolation period may change over time. Also, family members or close contacts may have to isolate for different times. Check the [Ministry of Health website](#) for current advice.

[How to self-isolate](#)

## Step 2: Work out how to best manage your illness

Illness caused by COVID-19 infection will vary in severity, depending on your vaccination status and risk of developing serious illness.

Most vaccinated people will experience mild or no symptoms and management at home is recommended.

A few people may experience severe illness.

Among unvaccinated people, 15% will experience severe disease and sadly 1% will die from the disease. Vaccination reduces the risk of hospitalisation and death 10-fold.

People with moderate-severe symptoms or with a high risk of serious illness should contact the practice for further support.

**To work out whether you need further support, please check your symptoms and underlying health conditions using the information below.**

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*Days 5-10 are often the most worrisome time for lung complications.*

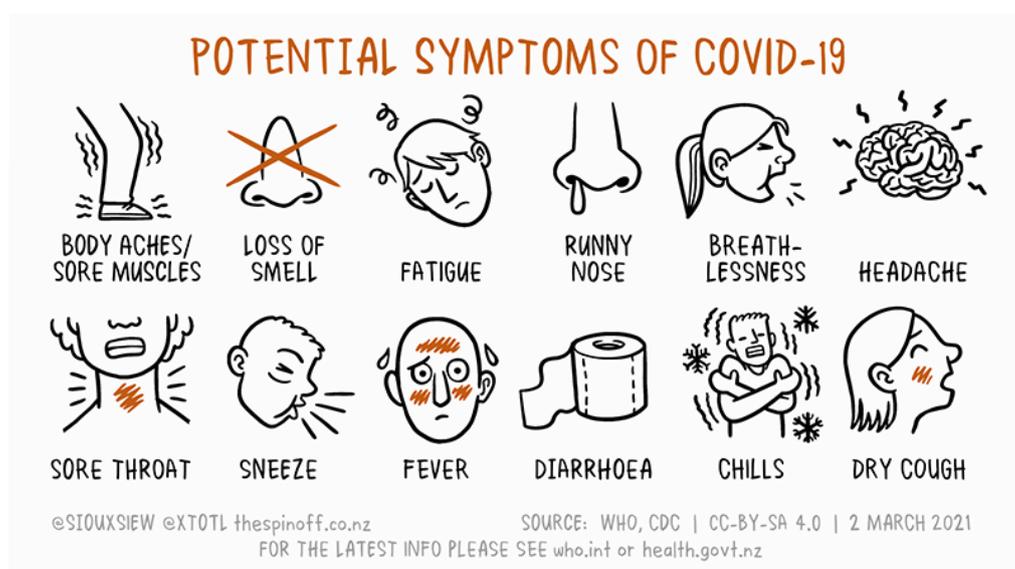
*Monitor closely for worsening symptoms on these days.*

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## Check your symptoms

### What symptoms can I expect?

Symptoms from COVID-19 infection are usually like a common cold or flu, though they may last longer (up to 4 weeks).



COVID-19 symptoms follow a predictable pattern.

[Expected time course of COVID-19 symptoms](#)

Day 5-10 of COVID-19 are often the most worrisome time for respiratory (lung) complications, particularly for older patients and those with underlying conditions like high blood pressure, obesity or diabetes.

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*Contact us if you have moderate or severe symptoms, or if you have concerns about an underlying health condition.*

*The phones are likely to be busy. Use MyIndici to send a message or text if possible.*

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### Are my symptoms mild, moderate or severe?

You can check your symptoms using this [calculator](#).

Note that it is an Australian resource. The emergency phone number in New Zealand is **111** (not 000).

Alternatively, see [this table](#) for a list of mild, moderate and severe symptoms.

### Check your risk

You are at high risk of serious illness from COVID-19 infection if you have any of the factors listed [here](#).

If you have none of these factors, your risk of severe illness from COVID-19 is low. However, you should monitor your symptoms for any worsening and contact us if you are concerned.

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## When to contact the practice

If you have **mild or no symptoms, you do not need to contact us**. Please follow the advice below on managing at home and contact us if you are getting worse, or have any specific concerns.

If you have **moderate or severe symptoms**, or are at **high risk of serious illness, please contact the practice**. A doctor or nurse will assess you and make a plan.

You do not need to contact us to report a positive RAT or PCR result.

#### Call 111 if you:

- have severe trouble breathing or severe chest pain
- are very confused or not thinking clearly
- feel faint or pass out (lose consciousness).

#### Contact the practice if:

- you have new or more trouble breathing
- your symptoms are getting worse
- you start getting better and then get worse
- you have symptoms of severe dehydration such as:
  - having a very dry mouth
  - passing only a little urine (pee)
  - feeling very light-headed.

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## How to contact us

The best way to get in touch is:

- **Portal message (via MyIndici)**
- **Text message.**

A doctor or nurse will triage your message and reply within a few hours.

You can also phone us on **521 1120**. It may be difficult to reach us by phone at busy times. Please be patient; leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

Alternatively, call the **COVID Healthline on 0800 358 5453**.

If you have difficulties breathing or feel faint or dizzy, call **111** immediately. Tell them you have COVID-19 when you ring.

## Managing illness from COVID-19 at home

Most symptoms can be managed with:

- bed rest (if lying down, change position every 30 minutes to two hours);
- taking paracetamol or ibuprofen to relieve headaches, aches and fevers;
- keeping hydrated with regular sips of water;
- honey or lozenges for a sore throat;
- decongestants for a blocked nose.
- Continue to take any regular medication.

Some people will be prescribed medication to reduce their chance of needing hospital level care. This might include the [Pulmicort Turbohaler](#), which is an inhaled corticosteroid that prevents swelling and irritation in the lungs, improving recovery time.

Most people will recover within two weeks but others may have persistent symptoms for months.

### Track your symptoms

Some people may be asked to track their, or their children's symptoms every day. You can use a symptom tracker. See the [Health Navigator website](#) for a range of different trackers.

You may be asked to measure your [breathing rate](#), heart rate or temperature.

Some people may be issued with a pulse oximeter by the Ministry of Health, or may have their own at home. This is a tool that measures oxygen concentration in the blood, to determine how well your lungs are functioning.

See here for [how to use a pulse oximeter](#).

### If you are getting worse

It is important to recognise when symptoms are getting worse and to get help.

[COVID-19 symptoms and when to get help](#)

## Children with illness from COVID-19

Most children have mild or no symptoms. See [Health Navigator](#) for more advice on caring for children at home, and when to get help.

## Financial and food support while isolating

Most people will be able to manage self-isolation with support from family and friends, but extra help is available if needed. Check the [COVID-19 website](#) for more information.

## Useful Links

[Home Medical Management Plan for COVID-19 by Dr Sandhya Ramanathan](#)

[Health Navigator: COVID-19 positive – care in the community](#)

[COVID-19 website](#)

Address | City, County/Region, Postcode

Telephone Number | Email Address