

# COVID-19 Update

## Nurse Newsletter March/April 2024



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention updated their guidance for COVID-19 in February and in March 2024 Washington Department of Health has adopted the same guidance. We are advised to use the same precautions for COVID as we are for flu, RSV and other respiratory viruses. Does this mean things are like they were before the pandemic? Not exactly.

We know more now! We are more aware of how we affect each other and how simple things like washing our hands and wearing masks can make a difference for reducing spread of illness.

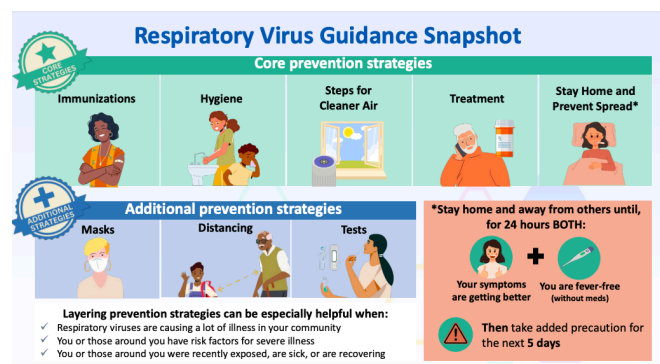
The CDC warns us that thousands of hospitalizations and deaths are caused by respiratory viruses every year such as COVID-19, Influenza (flu) and Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV). There are certain groups that are more susceptible or have high risk factors for respiratory viruses which includes older adults, young children, people with weakened immune systems, people with disabilities and pregnant people. Washington Department of Health advises us that respiratory viruses like COVID-19, flu and RSV cause a range of symptoms such as

cough, fever, chills, headache, sore throat, runny nose, sneezing, chest discomfort, decrease in appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, fatigue, body aches, new loss of taste of smell, weakness and wheezing. So what do you do if you have some of these symptoms or you test positive for covid, flu or RSV? I'm glad you asked.

New guidance from CDC and reiterated by WA DOH for public settings including schools and child care state to stay home and away from others including people you live with that aren't sick. When can you return back to normal activities? When both are true for at least 24 hours:

- ☐ Your symptoms are getting better overall and
- ☐ You have not had a fever (and are not using fever-reducing medication).

What do you do when you go back normal activities? CDC and DOH recommend taking added precautions for the next 5 days such as wearing a mask, good hand hygiene, cleaning regularly, physical distancing and improving air flow and filtration.



Sources: Accessed March 30, 2024

<https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/guidance/respiratory-virus-guidance.html>

<https://doh.wa.gov/emergencies/covid-19/prevent-spreading-respiratory-viruses>

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