

# Self-Isolation for Caregivers

As a caregiver, you (or the person you are caring for) may be called upon to self-isolate (especially in times of pandemic.) For example, if you travelled outside of Canada or were exposed to a person who was infected.

## Self-Isolation

Occurs when you have no symptoms AND you may have been exposed to a virus, so you isolate yourself to protect others and prevent yourself from spreading it further. *(See our definitions careguide.)*

### Self-isolate means to:

- Stay at home
- Monitor yourself for symptoms, even if mild, for 14 days
- Avoid contact with others

### There are 2 possibilities:

1. The caregiver needs to self-isolate
2. The care recipient needs to self-isolate

The next two pages provide guidance on how to deal with either one of these scenarios.





# Self-Isolation for Caregivers

## SCENARIO ONE: IF THE CAREGIVER NEEDS TO SELF-ISOLATE:

Housing Situation:	Living Situation:	The Care Recipient is Fairly Independent:	The Care Recipient is Dependent on You:
<p><b>The caregiver has a separate residence to isolate to.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, the caregiver should isolate him/her self in a totally separate residence away from the care recipient. (To avoid spreading the virus.)</li> <li>• When you visit to give care, try to limit the rooms or areas you visit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, find a backup caregiver to temporarily cover for you. If a backup is not an option, you can still care from a distance.</li> <li>• Deliver groceries to their door step or order delivery electronically.</li> <li>• Minimize visits by planning.</li> <li>• Keep in contact electronically: phone, text</li> <li>• Have a friend check in for you.</li> <li>• Do their banking, book appointments and talk to health care professionals remotely using technology.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, find a backup caregiver to temporarily cover for you.</li> <li>• If a backup is not an option, be sure to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) – See our video of the same title.</li> <li>• Sanitize everything you touch with disinfectant wipes and the area before you leave, including all touch points. (Light switches; doors; medical supplies; kitchen utensils.)</li> <li>• Minimize visits by planning ahead, e.g. freeze meals; stock up on medications and other supplies.</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Caregiver lives in the same residence as the care recipient.</b></p> <p><b>(You cannot use a backup caregiver because you don't want to expose someone else to a virus.)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a separate residence is not an option, then try to keep a separate area strictly for you and a separate area strictly for the care recipient.</li> <li>• If possible, stay in your area of the home as much as possible, away from potential germs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the care recipient to do what they can for themselves for the duration of your self-isolation.</li> <li>• Try to minimize direct contact by planning. E.g. Can they cook their own meals?</li> <li>• Wear a mask and try to stay in your area of the home.</li> <li>• Sanitize everything with disinfectant wipes as soon as your care is complete.</li> <li>• Do not share towels, face cloths, plates or cutlery. See our careguide on Dos and Don'ts of preventing infection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when you provide care.</li> <li>• Take all precautions to avoid infecting the person you are caring for.</li> <li>• Do not cough in the presence of the care recipient. Step outside of the care recipient's area before coughing, if possible.</li> </ul>



# Self-Isolation for Caregivers

## SCENARIO TWO: THE CARE RECIPIENT NEEDS TO SELF-ISOLATE:

Housing Situation:	Living Situation:	The Care Recipient is Fairly Independent:	The Care Recipient Is Dependent on You:
<p><b>The caregiver has a separate residence to isolate to.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If possible, the caregiver should isolate him/her self in a totally separate residence away from the care recipient. (To avoid catching the virus.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try to plan your care to minimize visits. Create multiple meals to put in the freezer, etc.</li> <li>• Deliver groceries to their door step or order delivery electronically.</li> <li>• Keep in contact electronically: phone, text.</li> <li>• Do their banking, book appointments and talk to health care professionals remotely using technology.</li> <li>• Sanitize all touch points using disinfectant wipes before you leave.</li> <li>• Wash your hands before you leave. Don't touch your face.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Instruct the person you are caring for to stay in one room or area.</li> <li>• Try to plan your care to minimize visits. Stock up on food, medications and supplies.</li> <li>• Be sure to wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when you visit – see our video of the same title.</li> <li>• Using disinfectant wipes, sanitize everything you use to provide care (supplies, equipment, walkers).</li> <li>• Sanitize designated area before you leave, including all touch points. (light switches; doors)</li> </ul>
<p><b>The caregiver has to live in the same residence as the care recipient.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If a separate residence is not an option, then try to keep a separate area strictly for you and a separate area strictly for the care recipient.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage the care recipient to do what they can for themselves for the duration of their self-isolation.</li> <li>• Wear a mask and minimize the time you spend in the care recipient's area.</li> <li>• Sanitize everything with disinfectant wipes as soon as your care is complete.</li> <li>• Do not share towels, face cloths, plates or cutlery. See our careguide on Dos and Don'ts on preventing infection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) when you provide care.</li> <li>• Do the best you can and take all precautions possible to avoid catching the virus yourself.</li> <li>• Wash your hands and all touch points, etc.</li> </ul>