

Planning for and keeping community visits safe:

Information for long-term care home residents and their loved ones

As COVID-19 restrictions have eased, there is more opportunity for you to visit in the community. However, it is still important to protect yourself against getting COVID-19 and other infections when outside your long-term care home. Being careful to protect yourself will also help to protect the other residents where you live. Follow the recommendations below and ask your loved ones to do the same.

Steps to take before a visit:	Steps to take during the visit:
<p>Get vaccinated. Being vaccinated reduces the risk of getting COVID-19 AND of passing it on to others. It also reduces your risk of becoming very sick with COVID-19. You should get your booster dose when you are eligible for it.</p> <p>Watch for symptoms. Check the Nova Scotia COVID-19 website for the list of symptoms.</p> <p>Cancel your visit and stay home if you or those you spend time with feel sick. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, cancel your visit, stay home, and test for COVID-19.</p> <p>Wear a mask. Routinely wearing a mask in public can prevent the spread of COVID-19.</p>	<p>Wear a mask. If there will be visitors from outside the home, ask them to wear a mask. You can also wear a mask. If visitors want to take masks off during the visit, ask them to keep a 2-metre distance as much as possible and consider opening a window or spending time outdoors if feasible.</p> <p>Gather safely. Try to limit the number of visitors and make informed choices about who you interact with and how. Try to keep a 2-metre distance from visitors who are not wearing a mask.</p> <p>Maintain healthy habits. All visitors should maintain healthy habits. If you are a loved one of a long-term care home resident who needs assistance, help them with hand washing.</p>

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Steps to take before a visit:	Steps to take during the visit:
<p>Test to protect. If you are a loved one of a long-term care home resident and you see them more than a few times every week, test twice weekly with rapid tests. If you see them occasionally, test within 24 hours of your visit. If you test positive, cancel your visit and stay home.</p> <p>Gather safely. Keep your social contacts to a small, consistent group. Make informed choices about who you interact with and how.</p> <p>Maintain healthy habits. Wash your hands often or use hand sanitizer. Cough and sneeze into your elbow. Avoid sharing food, drinks, and personal items with others.</p> <p>Clean regularly. Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces like doorknobs, railings, and light switches before the visit.</p> <p>Important. If you are a resident of a long-term care home and you develop symptoms of COVID-19 or were exposed to someone who is positive for COVID-19 during your visit, notify the home <i>before</i> you return so they can prepare. If you are a loved one of a long-term care home resident and it is needed, please assist in notifying the home.</p>	<p>Avoid higher-risk activities. Think about how important an activity is and if there is a safer way to do it. In general, the more people you spend time with or the closer the interaction, the higher the risk.</p> <p>If the visit is at someone's home, try to avoid spending time with people who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are not vaccinated • Don't wear masks • Have symptoms of or are positive for COVID-19 • Are self-isolating because of COVID-19 • You do not know • Have large social circles • Are singing, shouting, or exercising vigorously indoors • Are crowded together, especially indoors <p>If the visit is in public, try to avoid crowded, indoor spaces, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where people are not wearing masks • You can't maintain a 2-metre distance