

be kind

BALLARAT

Social Distancing vs Self Isolation

Social distancing

One way to slow the spread of viruses is social distancing. There are practical things you can do, to protect those more susceptible to the virus.

Households

- Practice good hand and cough/sneeze hygiene
- Avoid handshaking and other physical greetings
- Regularly clean shared high-touch surfaces, such as tables, kitchen benches and doorknobs
- Increase the amount of fresh air by opening windows or adjusting air conditioning
- Buy more goods and services online so you limit visits to the shop
- Consider what travel and outings are necessary, both individual and family, and go to open places such as parks.

Social distancing in the workplace

To reduce the spread of germs in the workplace:

- Stay at home if you are sick
- Consider if large gatherings can be rescheduled, staggered or cancelled
- Stop handshaking and other physical greetings
- Hold meetings via video conferencing or phone call
- Reconsider non-essential business travel
- Defer large face-to-face meetings
- Hold essential meetings outside in the open air if possible
- Promote good hand and cough/sneeze hygiene and provide hand sanitisers for all staff and workers
- Take lunch outside rather than in the lunchroom
- Clean and disinfect shared high-touch surfaces regularly

- Consider opening windows and adjusting air conditioning for more fresh air
- Limit food handling and shared food in the workplace
- Promote strictest hygiene among food preparation (canteen) staff and their close contacts.

Social distancing in schools

To reduce the spread of germs or viruses in schools:

- If your child is sick, do not send them to school (or childcare)
- Clean hands when entering school and at regular intervals
- Defer activities that lead to mixing between classes
- Avoid queuing, handholding and assemblies
- Promote a regular handwashing schedule
- Clean and disinfect shared high-touch surfaces regularly
- Conduct lessons outdoors where possible
- Consider opening windows and adjusting conditioning for more fresh air
- Promote strictest hygiene among food preparation (canteen) staff and their close contacts.

Find out more about [social distancing here](#)

Self-isolation (self-quarantine)

Self-isolation means staying at home to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to others.

You **MUST** self-isolate if any of the following applies to you:

- you have COVID-19
- you have been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19
- you arrived in Australia after midnight on 15 March 2020

If you do not need to self-isolate, you should still [protect yourself and others](#).

How to self-isolate

Self-isolation lasts for 14 days. During this time you must stay at home to prevent the possible spread of the virus to other people.

See specific advice for self-isolation when:

- you are sick ([English](#), [Simplified Chinese](#), [Farsi](#) and [Korean](#))
- you are not sick ([English](#), [Simplified Chinese](#), [Italian](#), [Farsi](#) and [Korean](#))

Staying home means you:

- do not go to public places such as work, school, shopping centres, childcare or university
- ask someone to get food and other necessities for you and leave them at your front door
- do not let visitors in — only people who usually live with you should be in your home
- do not need to wear a mask in your home, but do wear one if you have to go out (for example to seek medical attention)
- should stay in touch by phone and online with your family and friends

For students and children, you should notify the relevant school or childcare centre. Students may want to seek alternate arrangements for remote learning.

Going outside

If you live in a private house, it is safe for you to go into your garden or courtyard. If you live in an apartment or are staying in a hotel, it is also safe for you to go into the garden but you should wear a surgical mask to minimise risk to others. You should also move quickly through common areas.

This helps [protect yourself and others](#).

Monitor symptoms

When in isolation, monitor yourself for [symptoms](#).

What to do if you get sick

Call your doctor for an urgent assessment if you develop symptoms within 14 days of returning to Australia, or within 14 days of last contact of a confirmed case.

See [advice for others living with you](#).

Managing isolation

Being in isolation for 14 days can be stressful and boring. Suggestions include:

- keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media
- learn about COVID-19 and talk with others
- reassure young children using age-appropriate language
- where possible, keep up normal daily routines, such as eating well and exercise
- arrange to work from home
- ask your child's school to supply assignments or homework by post or email
- do things that help you relax and use isolation as an opportunity to do activities you don't usually have time for.

Advice for others living with you

If you are well, others that live with you do not need to self-isolate unless they also meet one of the isolation criteria.

However, if you develop symptoms and are suspected to have COVID-19, they will be classified as close contacts and will need to be isolated.

Returning to your community

People who have completed their 14-day period without developing symptoms can return to their daily activities.