Preparing for COVID-19

Featuring Dr Gajen Perinpanayagam, ACT Health Medical Officer

Video duration: 4 minutes 18 seconds

Hi, I'm Dr Gaj from the ACT Health COVID-19 Response team.

I'm here to talk about how you can prepare for a COVID-19 infection, and what to do if you test positive.

This is especially important if you're at higher risk of severe disease or getting very sick.

You may be at higher risk if:

- you're over the age of 70, or

- over the age of 50 and have additional risk factors

- you're an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person over the age of 30 and have additional risk factors, or

- you're a person with disability with additional risk factors.

Additional risk factors include chronic health conditions that might affect your heart, lungs, brain, liver, kidneys, or your immune system.

Prepare for a COVID-19 infection

If you're at risk of getting very sick from COVID-19, you should talk to your GP or one of your usual doctors now so you know what to do if you get COVID-19.

Being prepared ahead of time will help if you become unwell and need extra care and support.

You can book an appointment with your GP in person or using telehealth.

If you have a home care or disability provider, you can also talk to them about what they can do to help protect you from being exposed to COVID-19.

COVID-19 treatments

Ask your GP about COVID-19 treatments and medications.

There are different types of COVID-19 medications that can help stop you from getting very sick or needing to go to hospital.

Some can be taken as capsules or tablets. They need to be prescribed and started as soon as possible after becoming sick with COVID-19 as they work best if taken within 5 days of feeling unwell.

You can also talk to a pharmacist about how you can have your prescription filled and get other medications while you're at home and unwell. Many pharmacies will deliver medications to your home.

Please remember, COVID-19 medications do not replace vaccination. Vaccination is still the best protection against getting very sick from COVID-19.

Make sure you are up to date with your vaccines, including boosters and your annual flu vaccine. If you are not sure, ask your GP or check the information on the ACT COVID-19 website.

Getting information and advice

If you get COVID-19, and feel very sick or need health advice, you can call, or make a telehealth appointment with your GP.

If you don't have a regular GP or can't make an appointment to speak to a GP, the ACT COVID Care@Home team can help.

You can talk to the team about your COVID-19 symptoms and any treatment you might need.

HealthDirect is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for health advice.

The service finder tool on the HealthDirect website can also help you locate a nearby after-hours GP clinic.

Before I go, I just want to add that being prepared is important but so is prevention.

To help protect yourself from getting COVID-19, continue using the COVID Smart behaviours, like wearing a mask if you can, keeping your distance from others in indoor spaces where possible, washing your hands regularly, and staying at home when you're unwell.

Closing screens -

For more information

The latest COVID-19 information is available at www.covid19.act.gov.au or by following ACT Health on Facebook and Twitter.

For medical assistance and advice

Call ACT COVID Care@Home team on 02 5124 3085 between 8.30am to 5pm, daily.

After 5pm, call Health Direct on 1800 022 222. This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

www.healthdirect.gov.au