PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS.

STOP COVID

Coronavirus: the most important information

An infection with the new coronavirus can have serious consequences and prove fatal. If we all follow the rules, we can help protect ourselves and people at especially high risk.

Please note: The information found in this fact sheet covers the national rules. More stringent rules may apply in certain cantons.

1   Transmission of coronavirus

The virus spreads most frequently when people are in close, protracted contact; in other words if you keep a distance of less than 1.5 metres from someone who is infected without protection. This can take place as follows:

– **Via droplets:** When the infected person breathes, talks, sneezes or coughs, droplets containing the virus can directly get onto the mucous membranes (in the nose, mouth or eyes) of other people in the immediate vicinity. Transmission is also possible via very fine droplets (aerosols). Transmission by aerosols is possible over short distances or also over longer distances. This type of transmission occurs mainly in small and poorly ventilated indoor spaces where aerosols can accumulate over a longer period of time.

– **Via surfaces and the hands:** If infectious droplets get onto surfaces, others can become infected if they get these droplets on their hands and then touch their mouth, nose or eyes.

Important to note: You can also infect other people without noticing any symptoms yourself. This is because an infected individual is contagious from two days prior to the onset of symptoms until up to ten days after symptoms emerge. In the case of those who fall seriously ill, they can also be contagious for longer.

2   Symptoms of COVID-19

These symptoms are common:	
– Sore throat – Cough (usually dry) – Shortness of breath – Chest pain – High temperature	–

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Bundesamt für Gesundheit BAG
Office fédéral de la santé publique OFSP
Ufficio federale della sanità pubblica UFSP
Federal Office of Public Health FOPH

Covid-19: information in the languages of the migrant population

− Sudden loss of sense of smell and/or taste − Headache − General weakness, feeling unwell − Aching muscles − Head cold − Gastrointestinal symptoms (nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, stomach ache) − Skin rashes	

The symptoms of COVID-19 vary in severity and can vary according to the variant. Even a head cold can point to an infection. Symptoms can also be mild. Complications such as pneumonia are also possible.

3 Rules on hygiene and social distancing

We recommend you to have the coronavirus vaccination. Vaccination is the best protection against COVID-19 disease, its transmission and possible long-term effects. See Section 8.

In Switzerland the mask-wearing requirement continues to apply on public transport and in hospitals, clinics, retirement and care homes.

Ventilate all rooms regularly and frequently. The more people there are in a room and the smaller the room is, the more frequently it should be ventilated. Ensure that there is a draft when ventilating a room.

Wash your hands regularly and thoroughly with soap. The soap renders the virus harmless. If hand washing is not possible, hand sanitisers are a good alternative to render viruses harmless.

Cough or sneeze into a paper tissue or the crook of your arm. Use paper tissues and use them only once.

You can be infected with the coronavirus if you have close, prolonged contact with a potentially infected person. You can further protect yourself and others by reducing close contact with other people.

4 Testing

If you have one or more of the symptoms of COVID-19 (see Section 2), you may be infected with the coronavirus. Be sure to consistently observe the following instructions:

– Get yourself tested immediately. You can take a test at medical practices, hospitals or special test centres. A list of the places where you can be tested can be found at www.bag.admin.ch/testing#197439718. The test is free of charge.
– Stay at home before and after the test. Avoid all contact with other people until you have received your test result.
  – **What to do in the event of a positive test result:** Follow the instructions on isolation. You will find them at www.bag.admin.ch/migration-covid-en.

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 – **In the event of a negative test result:** Stay at home until you have no longer had symptoms for 24 hours.

To detect as many coronavirus infections as possible, people without symptoms are also tested. This can be done in the course of regular testing at work or in institutions. This testing is voluntary and free of charge. If you have the opportunity to take part in regular tests, we would advise you to do so to protect yourself and others.

Ask at the place where you have the test done what to do once you get your test results, or find out from the website www.bag.admin.ch/testing#242157159.

5   Isolation

Isolation and prevents the new coronavirus from spreading. A person who has been infected with the coronavirus must stay at home and not have any contact with other people. This means that new infections can be avoided.

Isolation: The period of isolation can be ended when 5 days have passed since the first symptoms of the disease emerged **and** the individual in question has exhibited no symptoms of the disease for 48 hours. After coming out of isolation the person should avoid public places and wear a mask when they have contact with other people.

Further information on isolation can be found in the "instructions on isolation" at www.bag.admin.ch/migration-covid-en.

An explanatory video on isolation in German, French, Italian and English can be found at www.foph-coronavirus.ch/downloads/#isolation. The video dubbed by Diaspora TV in 16 languages can be found at www.migesplus.ch/en/publications/are-you-sick-at-home-with-coronavirus.

6   Contact tracing

If an individual's coronavirus test is positive, contact tracing by the cantonal authorities begins:

 – The cantonal authorities work with the infected, i.e. positively tested, person to try to identify all those they may have come into close contact with – in the two days prior to the onset of symptoms until isolation began.
 – The authorities notify the people concerned about the possibility of infection and what to do next.

It is possible that the cantonal authority will not contact you immediately. **It is therefore important that, if necessary, you go into isolation of your own accord**. And if you have tested positive for COVID-19, it is also important that you inform people you have come into close contact with yourself.

7   People at especially high risk

For certain people, an infection with the coronavirus is dangerous. They can become seriously ill or die. The following people are deemed to be at especially high risk:

- **Older people:** The risk of a severe case if infected with the new coronavirus increases with age. From the age of 50, hospitalisation rates also increase. Pre-existing conditions likewise increase the risk.
- **Pregnant women**
- **Adults with Trisomy 21**
- **Adults with certain forms of the following chronic diseases:**
  - High blood pressure
  - Cardiovascular diseases
  - Diabetes
  - Pulmonary and respiratory illnesses
  - Conditions and therapies that weaken the immune system
  - Cancer
  - Serious obesity (with a BMI of 35 or more)
  - Chronic kidney disease
  - Liver cirrhosis

If you are one of these people and have symptoms of COVID-19 (see section 0), **call your doctor or a hospital immediately and get tested. Even at the weekend**. Describe your symptoms and say that you are a person deemed to be at especially high risk.

8   Vaccination

In Switzerland, you can get vaccinated against COVID-19. The vaccination is recommended for people aged 12 and over (including pregnant women). Children from age 5 can also be vaccinated. Swissmedic, the Swiss Agency for Therapeutic Products, has closely examined and authorised the vaccines against COVID-19. They are safe and effective.

However, there can be side effects with any vaccination. Nevertheless, according to current knowledge, the risk of serious side effects following vaccination against COVID-19 is much lower than the risk of becoming seriously ill after being infected with the coronavirus.

Is it already more than 4 months since your last vaccination? Sign up for a booster. The booster makes sure that you're well protected from severe illness again.

The cantons are responsible for the vaccinations. Information on when and where you can get vaccinated and how to register can be obtained from the authorities in your canton (www.foph-coronavirus.ch/cantons). The national COVID-19 vaccination infoline (+41 58 377 88 92, every day from 6 a.m. until 11 p.m.) also provides information on which is the responsible authority in your canton. You can also ask a doctor or a person of trust to register you for vaccination.

The COVID-19 vaccination is voluntary and free of charge for everyone living in Switzerland.

Further information on the vaccination can be found in the fact sheets at www.bag.admin.ch/migration-covid-en.

There is some misinformation circulating with regard to the COVID-19 vaccination. These videos present the most common vaccination myths and explain why they are untrue.

9   Find help

migesplus.ch web platform: This platform provides a lot more information on COVID-19. The information has been translated into numerous languages: www.migesplus.ch/en/top-ics/coronavirus-covid-19

Interpreters: From the start, ask for an interpreter if you are unable to communicate in hospital. Interpreting services are also available by phone. If professional interpreters are brought in, you don't have to take your relatives with you to translate, meaning they are protected from infection. In the event of medical interventions, you have the right to understand and be understood.

Important telephone numbers and e-mail addresses
  – If you feel threatened at home, you can find anonymous advice and protection at www.opferhilfe-schweiz.ch (German) / www.aide-aux-victimes.ch (French) / www.aiuto-alle-vittime.ch (Italian). In an emergency, call the police on 117.
  – The ambulance service can be reached by calling 144. This service is available around the clock all over Switzerland for all medical emergencies.
  – Infoline on the new coronavirus: By phoning 058 463 00 00, you can get answers to questions on the new coronavirus.
  – If you don't have a family doctor (GP): You can call Medgate on 0844 844 911 every day and through the night.

10   Further information

Languages: Protect yourself and others (foph-coronavirus.ch)
https://www.bag.admin.ch/bag/en/home/krankheiten/ausbrueche-epidemien-pandemien/ak-tuelle-ausbrueche-epidemien/novel-cov.html