

Okayama Prefecture COVID-19

Requests to All Residents and Business Owners
Period: from May 8th, 2023 (Mon)

Revised on April 20th, 2023

From May 8th, 2023 the classification of COVID-19 will change!

- As of May 8th, 2023, COVID-19 will be reclassified as a "Class 5" infectious disease, like seasonal influenza.
- As a result of the change, COVID-19 general prevention measures will no longer be enforced. Instead, it will be left up to the individual judgement of residents and businesses to take adequate measures.
- Okayama Prefecture will continue providing essential COVID-19 prevention information in an easy to understand format.

Information for Residents of Okayama Prefecture

COVID-19 Prevention Essentials (up to individual judgement)

➤ **Masking**

Wearing a mask in appropriate situations is recommended to avoid spreading COVID-19 to those most at risk of serious illness, such as the elderly. ※ Please consult “Mask Use Guidance” (February 10th, 2023) published by the National Office for COVID-19 and Other Emerging Infectious Disease Control.

➤ **Proper Hygiene and Ventilation**

Proper hygiene such as hand washing and sanitization, along with regular ventilation of enclosed spaces continue to be effective methods of preventing the spread of COVID-19.

➤ **Social Distancing**

Avoiding poorly ventilated places, large crowds, and close-up conversations are important measures to take during a wave of infections for individuals with a higher risk of serious illness.

A Healthy Lifestyle

➤ **Regular Exercise and a Balanced Diet**

It is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle, such as through appropriate exercise and eating habits.

Advanced Preparations

➤ **COVID-19 Vaccinations**

It is recommended that anyone with a higher risk of serious illness, such as those over 65 years of age or those with underlying health conditions, receive the Spring 2023 Vaccination beginning from May 8th.

➤ **Preparation for if You Get Sick**

Please purchase COVID-19 home testing kits and fever reducing medicine ahead of time.

What to do if you get sick

If you think you might have COVID-19

- Before heading to a doctor: calmly take note of your symptoms and what medicine you have at home. Perform a self-check using a home COVID-19 testing kit approved by the government.
 - **If you get a positive result:**
If your symptoms are light, please look after yourself at home.
 - **If you get a negative result:**
If your symptoms continue, please keep taking measures such as masking and washing your hands regularly.
- Those with a higher risk of serious illness (such as the elderly, those with underlying health conditions, and pregnant women) and those experiencing serious symptoms should contact the hospital ahead of time before going to see a doctor.

When seeing a doctor

- Contact the hospital or clinic ahead of time.
- Avoid going in when it is not urgent or necessary, and try to see your regular doctor in the middle of the day on a weekday, when it is usually less busy.
- When going to a hospital/clinic, pharmacy, nursing home etc. please follow basic COVID-19 prevention measures.
- Make sure to wear a mask to protect the elderly and those with underlying health conditions around you.

What to do if you have COVID-19

- Starting from May 8th, individuals who have caught COVID-19 will no longer be required by law to quarantine indoors. Whether to avoid going out or not will be left up to individual judgement. In the event of infection, please use the information below as a reference.
- Please be considerate and respectful of the personal choices made by those around you or in your employ.
- For medical institutions and nursing homes, please consider implementing work policies for sick employees using the information below as a reference. Please bear in mind that nursing homes host many individuals with a higher risk of serious illness.
- Additionally, the prefectural government may ask for even stronger cooperation during a wave of infections.

When staying indoors is recommended

- There is an especially high risk of spreading infection the first 5 days after developing symptoms. Counting the day after symptoms develop as day 1, avoid going outside for 5 days. (If it is absolutely necessary to go outside during this period, make sure no symptoms remain and wear a mask without exception.)
- **If symptoms continue to persist past the 5th day, please avoid going outside until 24 hours after symptoms such as fever, congestion, and sore throat have ended.**

If you are experiencing serious symptoms, please consult with a doctor.

Be considerate of those around you

- Individuals may remain contagious for the 10 day period starting the day after symptoms develop. Please be considerate of those around you by masking and avoiding contact with the elderly and other individuals with a higher risk of serious illness.
- If symptoms such as coughing and sneezing continue after this 10 day period, please continue to follow proper cough etiquette such as masking.

Information for Businesses in Okayama Prefecture

Voluntary Implementation

- With the change of the classification of COVID-19, industry specific prevention guidelines will be discontinued, and personal prevention measures will be left up to individual judgement.
- It will be up to businesses to decide on what measures they will enforce in the workplace, while considering the continued effectiveness of proper hygiene and ventilation, the costs and benefits of implementation, and the possibility of additional or alternative measures.
- During a wave of infections, or for medical institutions and nursing homes who host many individuals with a higher risk of serious illness, it may be advisable to continue implementing strict prevention measures using the previously government enforced measures as a reference.

Reference

Outpatient Handling Medical Institutions (Fever Response)

- Okayama Prefecture provides a list of facilities designated as Outpatient Handling Medical Institutions (Fever Response) so that residents can easily receive consultation, examinations, or tests from local medical facilities when they have COVID-19 or a fever.



Advanced Preparations

- To prepare for the possibility of getting sick or developing a fever, please purchase over-the-counter COVID-19 home testing kits and fever reducing medicine ahead of time. Information on locations that sell testing kits, as well as how to choose fever reducers are provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare below.

Where to buy
COVID-19 home
testing kits
(MHLW homepage)



Choosing a
fever reducer
(MHLW homepage)

