

Checklist for Setting Up a Sick Room in the Home

How to Set Up a Sick Room

If possible, set up the sick room in a **bedroom or another separate room** in the house. The room should have good lighting, a window that opens, and easy access to a personal bathroom with a sink and running water.

If a separate room is not available for the sick room, you will have to improvise by sectioning off part of a room for the sick person. And if the sick person and other family members will have to use the same bathroom, all hard surfaces should be cleaned each day with a disinfectant like rubbing alcohol or Lysol® (especially the sink and faucet handles). Towels, water bottles, drinking glasses, and other **personal care items** used by the sick person, **should not be used by other family members**.

Basic sick room equipment includes:

- bed
- side table or tray
- small wastebasket or a bucket lined with a plastic garbage bag
- pitcher or large bottle for water
- large plastic dishpan
- clipboard with paper and a pen for writing in the daily log
- clock
- hand crank or battery-powered radio
- good source of light
- flashlight with extra batteries

A **small chair or a stool** can be placed at the bedside. A **clothes hamper** or a garbage can lined with a plastic garbage bag can be used to collect soiled clothing and bedding before they are washed.

The sick person may want to have a **bell or a noisemaker to call for assistance**. You may also want to have a battery-powered **two-way radio, a phone, or a television** in the sick room.

Caution: Equipment brought into the sick room should stay there and be used only by the caregiver and the sick person.

Basic supplies the caregiver will use include:

- thermometer
- tissues
- hand wipes or a waterless hand sanitizer

- cotton balls
- rubbing alcohol
- plastic garbage bags
- measuring cup capable of holding 8 ounces or 250 ml
- over-the-counter medications for use in the sick room
- aprons or smocks (at least 2)
- latex household cleaning gloves (2 pairs)
- disposable vinyl gloves (2 boxes)
- N95 respirator masks (2 boxes) for use when the sick person is coughing or sneezing (can be purchased at hardware stores and some drugstores)

Over the Counter Medicines*

Generic Name	Common Brand Names [®]	Used For
Ibuprofen	Advil [®] /Motrin [®] /Nuprin [®]	Reduce fever, sore throat, muscle aches
Acetaminophen	Tylenol [®] /Tempra [®]	Reduce fever, sore throat, muscle aches
Oral Rehydration and Electrolyte Solution (ORS)	Pedialyte [®] , World Health Organization (WHO) ORS powder	Prevent dehydration

* The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend other cold and cough medicines for children younger than 2 years of age. See the full statement online at <http://www.aap.org/new/kidcolds.htm>

A note about prescription medications

If you take prescriptions regularly, **talk to your doctor about having at least a three-month supply on hand in case of a medical emergency**, like a pandemic. Many health insurance companies now only reimburse patients for a 30-day supply of prescription medicines. Ask your doctor or health care provider to help resolve this issue so that you have the necessary medications for an extended time period.

Basic bedding, clothing and personal supplies for the sick person include:

- 2 sets of sheets and pillowcases (if possible)
- blankets
- washcloths and towels
- change of clothes including socks, underwear and pajamas or loose-fitting tops and pants

Other **personal care items** include:

- toothbrush and toothpaste
- soap
- lotion
- mouthwash
- lip balm or lip moisturizer
- dental floss
- shaving equipment
- feminine sanitary supplies

Personal supplies should be kept in the sick room or a special place in the bathroom and **used only by the sick person.**

The sick person may want to use a **robe and slippers** in the sick room and for going back and forth to the bathroom. He or she may also want to have other personal items on hand including **toys, books, and a computer.** These items should be left in the sick room and not moved around to other places in the home. **Each item in the sick room should be able to be cleaned** by washing with soap and water, or wiped with a disinfectant (alcohol or other household cleaner) if necessary.