



COVID-19

To maximize protection from the [Delta variant](#) and prevent possibly spreading it to others, get vaccinated as soon as you can and wear a mask indoors in public if you are in [an area of substantial or high transmission](#).

Quarantine and Isolation

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Quarantine vs. Isolation

- You [quarantine](#) when you might have been exposed to the virus.
- You [isolate](#) when you have been infected with the virus, even if you don't have symptoms.

For Health Departments

For detailed CDC recommendations for public health agencies on the duration of quarantine, see [Science Brief: Options to Reduce Quarantine](#).

Quarantine

Quarantine if you have been in [close contact](#) (within 6 feet of someone for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period) with someone who has COVID-19, unless you have been [fully vaccinated](#). People who are fully vaccinated do NOT need to quarantine after contact with someone who had COVID-19 unless they have [symptoms](#). However, fully vaccinated people should get tested 3-5 days after their exposure, even if they don't have symptoms and wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until their test result is negative.

What to do

- Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19.
- Watch for fever (100.4°F), cough, shortness of breath, or [other symptoms](#) of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from people you live with, especially people who are at [higher risk](#) for getting very sick from COVID-19.

After quarantine

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.

You may be able to shorten your quarantine

Your local public health authorities make the final decisions about how long quarantine should last, based on local conditions and needs. Follow the recommendations of your local public health department if you need to quarantine. Options they will consider include stopping quarantine

- After day 10 without testing
- After day 7 after receiving a negative test result (test must occur on day 5 or later)

Isolation

Isolation is used to separate people infected with COVID-19 from those who are not infected.

People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. At home, anyone sick or infected should separate from others, stay in a specific "sick room" or area, and use a separate bathroom (if available).

What to do

- Monitor your symptoms. If you have an [emergency warning sign](#) (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately.
- Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible.
- Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Avoid contact with other members of the household and pets.
- Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- [Wear a mask](#) when around other people if able.

Learn more about [what to do if you are sick](#) and [how to notify your contacts](#).

When You Can be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19

Most people do not require testing to decide when they can be around others; however, if your healthcare provider recommends testing, they will let you know when you can resume being around others based on your test results.

For Anyone Who Has Been Around a Person with COVID-19

Anyone who has had [close contact](#) with someone with COVID-19 should quarantine for 14 days **after their last exposure** to that person, except if they meet the following conditions:

Someone who has been [fully vaccinated](#) and shows no symptoms of COVID-19 does not need to [quarantine](#). However, fully vaccinated close contacts should:

- [Wear a mask](#) indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until a negative test result.
- Get tested 3-5 days after [close contact](#) with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19.
- Get tested and [isolate](#) immediately if experiencing [COVID-19 symptoms](#).

Someone who tested positive for COVID-19 with a [viral test](#) within the previous 90 days **and** has subsequently recovered **and** remains without COVID-19 symptoms does not need to [quarantine](#). However, close contacts with prior COVID-19 infection in the previous 90 days should:

- [Wear a mask](#) indoors in public for 14 days after exposure.
- Monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and [isolate](#) immediately if symptoms develop.
- Consult with a healthcare professional for testing recommendations if new symptoms develop.

I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms

You can be around others after:

- 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**

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- 24 hours with no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving*

**Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation*

Note that these recommendations **do not** apply to people with severe COVID-19 or with weakened immune systems (immunocompromised).

I tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after 10 days have passed since you had a positive viral test for COVID-19.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for “I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms.”

I was severely ill with COVID-19 or have a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) caused by a health condition or medication.

People who are severely ill with COVID-19 might need to stay home longer than 10 days and up to 20 days after symptoms first appeared. [People with weakened immune systems](#) may require testing to determine when they can be around others. Talk to your healthcare provider for more information. Your healthcare provider will let you know if you can resume being around other people based on the results of your testing.

People who are immunocompromised should be counseled about the potential for reduced immune responses to COVID-19 vaccines and the need to continue to follow [current prevention measures](#) (including wearing [a mask](#), [staying 6 feet apart from others](#) they don't live with, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated indoor spaces) to protect themselves against COVID-19 until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider. Close contacts of immunocompromised people should also be encouraged to be vaccinated against COVID-19 to help protect these people.

For Healthcare Professionals

If you are a healthcare professional who thinks or knows you had COVID-19, you should follow the same recommendations listed above for when you can resume being around others outside the workplace. When you can return to work depends on different factors and situations. For information on when you can return to work, see the following:

[Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection \(Interim Guidance\)](#)

Digital Resources



I Think or Know I had COVID-19, and I had Symptoms. When can I be Around Others?

If you have or think you might have COVID-19, it is important to stay home and away from others. When you can be around others depends on different factors for different situations.

I Think or Know I had COVID-19, but I had No Symptoms. When can I be Around Others?



If you have or think you might have COVID-19, it is important to stay home and away from others. When you can be around others depends on different factors for different situations.



What's the difference between quarantine and isolation?

Ongoing COVID-19 Exposure FAQ

How do people living together manage quarantine when they cannot be separated from the person with COVID-19?

It is very important for people with COVID-19 to remain apart from other people if possible, even if they are living together. If separation of the person with COVID-19 from others in the home is not possible, the other members of the household will have *ongoing* exposure, meaning they will be repeatedly exposed until that person is no longer able to spread the virus to other people.

People with COVID-19 can spread the virus to other people for 10 days after they develop symptoms, or 10 days from the date of their positive test if they do not have symptoms. The person with COVID-19 and all members of the household should wear a [well-fitted mask](#) and consistently, inside the home. If possible, one member of the household should care for the person with COVID-19 to limit the number of people in the household that are in [close contact](#) with the infected person. Take steps to [protect yourself and others](#) to reduce transmission in the home. **Quarantine** is a strategy to prevent transmission of COVID-19. It ensures that unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated people who have been in [close contact](#) with someone with COVID-19 stay apart from others. You quarantine when you have been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 and are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated. **Isolation** is a strategy to prevent transmission of COVID-19 by separating people with COVID-19 from those who are not infected. You isolate when you have symptoms of COVID-19 or are infected with the virus that causes COVID-19, even if you don't have symptoms.

Public health recommendations for testing and quarantine of close contacts with ongoing exposure depend on vaccination status.

What are the public health recommendations for close contacts who have ongoing exposure to COVID-19?

Close contacts with ongoing exposure who are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated

People who are unvaccinated or not [fully vaccinated](#) and have ongoing exposure to COVID-19 should

- Get tested immediately when they are identified as a [close contact](#)

Get tested immediately when they are identified as a [close contact](#).

- Begin [quarantine](#) immediately and continue to quarantine throughout the isolation period of the person with COVID-19.
- Continue to quarantine for an additional 14 days starting the day *after* the end of isolation for the person with COVID-19.
- Get tested again 5-7 days after the end of isolation of the infected household member.
- Wear a mask when in contact with the person with COVID-19 throughout the person's isolation period.
- Wear a mask when in contact with other people in the home until quarantine ends.
- [Isolate](#) immediately if they develop [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 or test positive.

Close contacts with ongoing exposure who are fully vaccinated

People who are [fully vaccinated](#) and have ongoing exposure to COVID-19 should

- Get tested 3-5 days after their *first* exposure. A person with COVID-19 is considered infectious starting 2 days before they develop symptoms, or 2 days before the date of their positive test if they do not have symptoms.
- Get tested again 3-5 days after the end of isolation for the person with COVID-19.
- Wear a mask when in contact with the person with COVID-19 throughout the infected person's isolation period.
- Wear a mask indoors in public until 14 days after the infected person's isolation period ends or until the fully vaccinated close contact receives their final test result.
- [Isolate](#) immediately if they develop [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 or test positive.

What should I do if multiple people I live with test positive for COVID-19 at different times?

Recommendations for this situation depend on vaccination status:

- When multiple members of the household become infected at different times and the people with COVID-19 can't isolate from other members of the household, [close contacts](#) who are **unvaccinated** or **not fully vaccinated** should
 - Quarantine throughout the isolation period of *any* infected person in the household.
 - Continue to quarantine until 14 days *after* the end of isolation date for the *most recently infected* member of the household. For example, if the last day of isolation of the person most recently infected with COVID-19 was June 30, the new 14-day quarantine period starts on July 1.
 - Get tested 5-7 days *after* the end of isolation for the *most recently infected* member of the household.
 - Wear a mask when in contact with *any* person with COVID-19 while that person is in isolation.
 - Wear a mask when in contact with other people in the home until quarantine ends.
 - Isolate immediately if they develop symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive.
- When multiple members of the household become infected at different times and the people with COVID-19 can't isolate from other members of the household, [close contacts](#) who are [fully vaccinated](#) in this situation should
 - Get tested 3-5 days after their first exposure. A person with COVID-19 is considered infectious starting 2 days before they developed symptoms, or 2 days before the date of their positive test if they do not have symptoms.
 - Get tested again 3-5 days *after* the end of isolation for the *most recently infected* member of the household.
 - Wear a mask when in contact with *any* person with COVID-19 while that person is in isolation.
 - Wear a mask indoors in public until 14 days after the end of isolation for the *most recently infected* member of the household or until the fully vaccinated close contact receives their final test result. For example, if the last day of isolation for the person most recently infected with COVID-19 was June 30, the new 14-day period to wear a mask indoors in public starts on July 1.
 - [Isolate](#) immediately if they develop [symptoms](#) of COVID-19 or test positive.

I had COVID-19 and completed isolation. Do I have to quarantine or get tested if someone I live with gets COVID-19 shortly after I completed isolation?

No. If you recently completed isolation and someone in your household tests positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 shortly after the end of your isolation period, you do not have to quarantine or get tested as long as you do not develop new symptoms. Once all members of the household have completed isolation or quarantine, refer to the guidance below for new exposures to COVID-19.

- People who had COVID-19, recovered, and completed 10 days of isolation and then during the 90 days following the end of isolation come into [close contact](#) with someone with COVID-19 do not have to quarantine or get tested if they do not have symptoms. But they should
 - Wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days after exposure.
 - Monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and isolate immediately if symptoms develop.
 - Consult with a healthcare provider for testing recommendations if new symptoms develop.
- If more than 90 days have passed since recovery from infection, people who had COVID-19 should follow recommendations for close contacts based on their vaccination status.

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