



COVID-19

Quarantine and Isolation (Q&I) Calculator FAQ

Updated Apr. 21, 2022

Does the Q&I Calculator apply to healthcare personnel? 

No. The recommendations in the [Q&I Calculator](#) do not apply to healthcare personnel. This exclusion is outlined in the Q&I Calculator under *"What groups and high-risk settings does this tool NOT apply to?"*

For guidance specific to healthcare personnel, see:

- [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2](#)

Does the Q&I Calculator apply to patients, residents, and visitors to healthcare settings? 

No. The recommendations in the [Q&I Calculator](#) do not apply to patients, residents, and visitors to healthcare settings. This exclusion is outlined in the Q&I Calculator under *"What groups and high-risk settings does this tool NOT apply to?"*

For guidance specific to healthcare settings, see:


- [Interim Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Healthcare Personnel During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) Pandemic](#)

Does the Q&I Calculator apply to high-risk congregate settings? 


No. The recommendations in the [Q&I Calculator](#) do not apply to certain high-risk congregate settings, such as correctional and detention facilities, homeless shelters, and cruise ships. This exclusion is outlined in the Q&I Calculator under *"What groups and high-risk settings does this tool NOT apply to?"*

For guidance specific to these settings, see:


- Homeless service providers: [Interim Guidance for Homeless Service Providers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
- Correctional and detention facilities: [Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) in Correctional and Detention Facilities](#)
- Cruise ships: [Technical Instructions for Mitigation of COVID-19 Among Cruise Ship Crew](#)

Why does the Q&I Calculator limit the dates the user can enter to the previous two weeks? 


COVID-19 infections with mild or no symptoms and close contact exposures more than 14 days ago do not require any actions for isolation, quarantine, testing, or wearing a mask around others. Limiting the date function to the previous two weeks helps to eliminate data entry errors that may occur.

Why does the Q&I Calculator ask close contacts if they had confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days? 


Recommendations for close contacts to quarantine, get tested, and wear well-fitting masks will vary depending on vaccination status and history of prior COVID-19 diagnosis in the past 90 days. People who tested positive for COVID-19 with a viral test within the previous 90 days and subsequently recovered and remain without COVID-19 symptoms do not need to quarantine or get tested after close contact. The calculator asks if someone had confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days to determine if they need to quarantine (stay home). People can use the [Q&I Calculator](#) to determine if they need to quarantine (stay home) and for how long by entering the date of their last close contact. The Q&I Calculator also provides customized information on what precautions close contacts may need to take, such as getting tested, wearing a well-fitting mask, and avoiding travel. The tool helps you determine whether you tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 90 days by calculating a 90-day window based on the current date.

Can the Q&I Calculator be used to determine isolation and quarantine recommendations for people who live together and cannot be separated from the person with COVID-19? 


If separation of the person with COVID-19 from others that they live with is not possible, the other people that they live with 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 ongoing exposure should refer to the [Ongoing Exposure FAQ](#) for recommendations. Recommendations for close contacts to quarantine, get tested, and wear well-fitting masks will vary depending on vaccination status and history of prior COVID-19 diagnosis in the past 90 days. People can use the [Q&I Calculator](#) to determine if they need to quarantine (stay home) and for how long by entering the date of their last close contact based on the recommendations in the Ongoing Exposure FAQ. The Q&I Calculator also provides customized information on what precautions close contacts may need to take, such as getting tested, wearing a well-fitting mask, and avoiding travel.

Why does the Q&I Calculator ask close contacts for their vaccination status? 

Recommendations for close contacts to quarantine, get tested, and wear well-fitting masks will vary depending on vaccination status and history of prior COVID-19 diagnosis in the past 90 days. The calculator asks about vaccination status to determine if a person needs to quarantine (stay home). People can use the [Q&I Calculator](#) to determine if they need to quarantine (stay home) and for how long by entering the date of their last close contact. The Q&I Calculator also provides customized information on what precautions close contacts may need to take, such as getting tested, wearing a well-fitting mask, and avoiding travel.

Does the Q&I Calculator apply to K-12 school and early care and education (ECE) settings? 

The recommendations in the [Q&I Calculator](#) may apply in K-12 school and ECE settings. However, isolation and quarantine recommendations may vary by local policies, vaccination status, and ability to comply with masking recommendations. Parents and caregivers with children in K-12 schools or ECE programs should consult the program administrator for specific isolation and quarantine guidance in their school or ECE setting. This recommendation is outlined in the Q&I Calculator under *"What groups and high-risk settings does this tool NOT apply to?"*

Does the Q&I Calculator help determine who is a close contact? 

No. The Q&I Calculator does not help you determine if you are a close contact, but it does provide the definition of a close contact under *“What is a close contact?”* People may be notified that they are a close contact by a person they know who has COVID-19, or through their employer, school, or other business or organization. People who know they are a close contact of a person with COVID-19 can use the [Q&I Calculator](#) to determine if they need to quarantine (stay home) and for how long by entering the date of their last close contact. The Q&I Calculator also provides customized information on what precautions close contacts may need to take, such as getting tested, wearing a well-fitting mask, and avoiding travel.

For help to determine a close contact to COVID-19 please refer to these infographics:

- K-12 school settings: [Steps for Determining Close Contact and Quarantine in K-12 Schools](#)
- Non-K-12 school settings: [How to Determine a Close Contact for COVID-19](#)

Does the Q&I Calculator apply to people who are moderately or severely ill or immunocompromised?

No. The recommendations provided in the [Q&I Calculator](#) do not apply to people who are moderately or severely ill or [immunocompromised](#). Moderately ill means experiencing symptoms that affect the lungs like shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, and severely ill means requiring hospitalization, intensive care, or ventilation support. People who are moderately or severely ill or immunocompromised should talk to their healthcare provider about when they can end isolation. This recommendation is outlined in the Q&I Calculator under *“What groups and high-risk settings does this tool NOT apply to?”*

Healthcare professionals should see: [Ending Isolation and Precautions for People with COVID-19: Interim Guidance](#)

How is the Q&I Calculator different than CDC’s existing Self-Checker Tool?

Both CDC’s [Coronavirus Self-Checker Tool](#) and [Q&I Calculator](#) are quick and easy tools that provide personalized recommendations. While the Self-Checker Tool focuses on all applicable COVID-19 guidance, including quarantine and isolation information, the Q&I Calculator focuses exclusively on quarantine and isolation information. It is intended for those who have recently tested positive for COVID-19 or learned they are a close contact of someone with COVID-19.

When should people seek medical advice?

The [Quarantine and Isolation Calculator](#) is not intended for people who have a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) or who are seriously ill. People who are immunocompromised, seriously ill, or seeking medical advice should always contact a healthcare provider. In addition, anyone who has emergency warning signs, such as trouble breathing or persistent chest pain or pressure, should seek emergency medical care right away.

Can the Q&I Calculator be used in the workplace?

Except in healthcare and high-risk congregate settings, employers can use the [calculator](#) to know how long employees with COVID-19 should isolate and when employees who have a close contact exposure should quarantine, get tested, and wear a well-fitting mask. Employers are encouraged to implement flexible, non-punitive paid sick leave and supportive policies and practices as part of a comprehensive approach to prevent and reduce transmission among employees.

For guidance specific to healthcare and high-risk congregate settings, see:

- Healthcare professionals: [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2](#)

- Homeless service providers: [Interim Guidance for Homeless Service Providers to Plan and Respond to Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#)
 - Correctional and detention facilities: [Guidance on Management of Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\) in Correctional and Detention Facilities](#)
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Last Updated Apr. 21, 2022