

## General Population: Home **Isolation** Guidance for People Who Test COVID-19 Positive or Have Symptoms Consistent with COVID-19\*

*Revised January 7, 2022 — Additional updates may occur as CDC formalizes its latest guidance.*

**Isolation** is for people who have tested **positive** or have **symptoms** consistent with COVID-19\*\* and are waiting to be tested or diagnosed. It prevents the spread of COVID-19 by asking people who have COVID-19 (or those with symptoms) to stay away from others until they have fully recovered and can no longer transmit the virus.

Regardless of your vaccination status, if you test **POSITIVE for COVID-19** with a viral test (PCR or antigen), you need to **isolate** at home for **at least 5 days**.

If you have **symptoms consistent with COVID-19\*\***, you need to **isolate** at home and **get tested for COVID-19** with a viral test (PCR or antigen).

Follow the **Home Isolation Flow Chart** on the back of this page to determine how long you need to **isolate** at home based on your symptoms and COVID-19 test result.

### During and immediately after **isolation**:

- For **at least 5 days** after the start of your symptoms (or date you were tested, if you do not have symptoms):
  - **Isolate** at home and away from others, except to get essential medical care. This includes:
    - Not going to work\*, school, or public areas
    - Not traveling or using public transportation, rideshares, or taxis
  - **Separate** yourself from others in your home, as much as possible. Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom, if possible. **If you cannot separate from others at home, you need to wear a [well-fitting mask](#) when you are around others.**
- You may leave your home after **isolating** for at least 5 full days from the start of your symptoms (or date you were tested, if you are symptom-free) if you do not have a fever and your other symptoms are improving. For the 5 days **after isolation** (i.e., days 6–10):
  - **Wear a [well-fitting mask](#)** when around others. You should not do things or go to places where you are unable to wear a mask (e.g., eating with others, going to restaurants, gyms, etc.).
    - **If you cannot wear a mask, isolate at home for at least 10 full days** from the start of your symptoms (or date you were tested, if you are symptom-free).
  - **Avoid [those at higher risk](#)** for getting very sick from COVID-19 (e.g., immunocompromised, nursing homes).
  - **Avoid travel.** If you must travel, you may after 5 full days and only if always wearing a [well-fitting mask](#).
- **Take steps to [improve ventilation at home](#)**, if possible.
- **Do not share household items** like dishes, cups, eating utensils, and bedding.
- **Monitor your symptoms.** Seek emergency medical care if you have an [emergency warning sign](#).

\*This **Isolation** guidance applies to most people under most circumstances. However, there are return-to-work guidelines for **Healthcare Personnel** who should follow CDC's [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel](#) at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html). This includes (but is not limited to) emergency medical service personnel, nurses, nursing assistants, home healthcare personnel, physicians, technicians, therapists, phlebotomists, pharmacists, dental healthcare personnel, students and trainees, contractual staff not employed by the healthcare facility, and persons not directly involved in patient care but who could be exposed while working in the healthcare setting.

\*\*Symptoms of COVID-19 can range from mild to severe illness and may include:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever or chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Fatigue (not as sole symptom in school setting)
- Nausea or vomiting, diarrhea
- Sore throat, congestion or runny nose
- New loss of taste or smell

Check the [CDC website](#) for the latest list of COVID-19 symptoms.

# COVID-19 Home Isolation Guidance Flow Chart

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**START**  
Do you have **symptoms**<sup>1</sup> consistent with COVID-19, **and/or** have you tested **POSITIVE** for COVID-19?

- 1. Symptoms of COVID-19** can range from mild to severe illness, may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure, and may include:
- Congestion or runny nose
  - Cough
  - Muscle or body aches
  - New loss of taste or smell
  - Sore throat
  - Fever or chills
  - Nausea or vomiting, diarrhea
  - Headache
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
  - Fatigue (not as sole symptom in school setting)

**NO, I do not have symptoms**<sup>1</sup>  
**but**  
**YES, I tested POSITIVE**  
ISOLATE until it has been **at least 5 full days** since your positive test sample was taken.  
You may leave isolation after at least 5 days if you **wear a mask** around others until it has been **10 days** since your positive test sample was taken. During this time, you should avoid situations where a mask cannot be worn (e.g., while eating in a restaurant), exposure to high-risk populations, and travel.  
**Re-evaluate if symptoms appear during this time.**<sup>1</sup>

**YES, I have symptoms**<sup>1</sup>  
**and**  
**YES, I tested POSITIVE**  
ISOLATE until it has been **at least 5 full days** since your symptoms appeared **and** until you have been fever-free for **at least 24 hours** (without the use of fever-reducing medication) **and** your other symptoms are improving.  
You may leave isolation after at least 5 days if you **wear a mask** around others until it has been **10 days** since your symptoms appeared. During this time, you should avoid situations where a mask cannot be worn (e.g., while eating in a restaurant), exposure to high-risk populations, and travel.

**YES, I have symptoms**<sup>1</sup>  
**but**  
**NO, I am UNTESTED, or NO, awaiting my test result**  
**Get tested** if you have not already and follow the **POSITIVE** guideline at left until you know your result, then re-evaluate.

**YES, I have symptoms**<sup>1</sup>  
**but**  
**NO, I tested NEGATIVE**  
ISOLATE until you have been **fever-free** (without the use of fever-reducing medication) for **at least 24 hours** **and** your other symptoms are improving.

**NO, I do not have symptoms**<sup>1</sup>  
**and**  
**NO, I am UNTESTED, or NO, awaiting my test result, or NO, I tested NEGATIVE**  
**No isolation needed.**  
Re-evaluate if symptoms appear.

**SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS FOR PEOPLE IN ISOLATION**

- 1. People who are unable to mask** should ISOLATE for **at least 10 full days** from the time symptoms appeared (or when positive test sample was taken, if asymptomatic, and re-evaluate if symptoms appear<sup>1</sup>).
- 2. People in high-risk settings** (including healthcare patients, LTCF residents, homeless shelter clients, and correctional facility inmates/detainees) should ISOLATE for **at least 10 full days** from the time symptoms appeared (or when positive test sample was taken, if asymptomatic, and re-evaluate if symptoms appear<sup>1</sup>).
- 3. People who are severely immunocompromised** need to ISOLATE for **at least 10 full days**. In consultation with their healthcare provider, they may need to ISOLATE for up to 20 days and be tested before being around others.
- 4. People who are severely ill from COVID-19** including those hospitalized, admitted to the ICU, or who required ventilation need to ISOLATE for **at least 10 full days**. In consultation with their healthcare provider, they may need to ISOLATE for up to 20 days and be tested before being around others.
- 6. Healthcare personnel** who are returning to work from ISOLATION should consult CDC's **Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel** at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html>

**SPECIAL EXCEPTION**  
**Close Contacts**<sup>2</sup>  
If you were exposed to someone with COVID-19, you may be subject to **QUARANTINE**.  
See the guideline at [www.Maricopa.gov/COVIDquarantine](http://www.Maricopa.gov/COVIDquarantine)

**2. Close Contacts** are people who were **within 6 feet** of a person with COVID-19 while infectious for a **cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period**, regardless of whether masks were worn. **[Exception: in the K-12 setting, a student who was within 3-6 feet of an infected student is not considered a close contact if both students were engaged in consistent and correct use of well-fitting masks at all times. This exception does not apply to teachers, staff or other adults in the classroom setting.]**