



## COVID-19

# What to Do If You Were Exposed to COVID-19

Updated Aug. 24, 2022

**Looking for the Quarantine and Isolation Calculator?** It's currently being updated and will be posted here when available.

If you have tested positive or are showing symptoms of COVID-19, [isolate immediately](#).

## About Being Exposed to COVID-19

If you were exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19 or have been told by a healthcare provider or public health authority that you were exposed, here are the steps that you should take, regardless of your vaccination status or if you have had a previous infection. Learn how COVID-19 spreads and the [factors that make risk of spread higher or lower](#).

## After Being Exposed to COVID-19



**START PRECAUTIONS**  
**Immediately**

Wear a [mask](#) as soon as you find out you were exposed  
**Start counting from Day 1**

- Day 0 is the day of your last exposure to someone with COVID-19
- **Day 1 is the first full day** after your last exposure



CONTINUE PRECAUTIONS

## 10 Full Days

You can still develop COVID-19 up to 10 days after you have been exposed

### Take Precautions

**Wear a high-quality [mask](#) or respirator (e.g., N95) any time you are around others inside your home or indoors in public <sup>1</sup>**

- Do not go places where you are unable to wear a mask. For travel guidance, see CDC's [Travel](#) webpage.

**Take [extra precautions](#) if you will be around people who are [more likely to get very sick from COVID-19](#).**

[More about how to protect yourself and others >](#)

### Watch for symptoms

- fever (100.4°F or greater)
- cough
- shortness of breath
- [other COVID-19 symptoms](#)

### If you develop symptoms

- [isolate immediately](#)
- [get tested](#)
- stay home until you know the result

If your test result is positive, follow the [isolation recommendations](#).



GET TESTED  
Day 6

## Get tested at least 5 full days after your last exposure

Test even if you don't develop symptoms.

If you already had COVID-19 within the past 90 days, see [specific testing recommendations](#).



IF YOU TEST

### Negative

**Continue taking precautions through day 10**

- Wear a high-quality mask when around others at home and indoors in public

**You can still develop COVID-19 up to 10 days after you have been exposed.**



IF YOU TEST

### Positive

**Isolate immediately**

\*About negative test results

As noted in the Food and Drug Administration labeling for authorized over-the-counter antigen tests, negative test results do not rule out SARS-CoV-2 infection and should not be used as the sole basis for treatment or patient management decisions, including infection control decisions.

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<sup>1</sup>Masks are not recommended for children under ages 2 years and younger, or for people with some disabilities. Other prevention actions (such as improving ventilation) should be used to avoid transmission during these 10 days.

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Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\), Division of Viral Diseases](#)