

1/3/2022

Department of Health Updated Guidance on Isolation and Quarantine

Of Note: this guidance does not apply to Healthcare Workers. Isolation refers to people who are infected with COVID-19. Quarantine refers to people that are just exposed to people with COVID-19.

For People WITH COVID-19 Infection: How long do I need to isolate?

Everyone with COVID-19 must isolate for at least 5 days. How long you have to isolate depends on whether you have [symptoms](#) and if you get a negative follow-up viral test on day 5 or later. If you test on day 5 or later, it is better to use an antigen test because NAAT/PCR tests can stay positive even after you are no longer infectious.

Regardless of when your isolation or quarantine ends, those with COVID-19 infection or exposure need to wear medical grade masks indoors and outdoors until 10 days have passed since initial infection or last exposure.

Ending isolation: if you have symptoms and test positive for COVID-19 or if your doctor thinks that you have COVID-19

You must stay home until:

- At least 5 days have passed since your symptoms first started **and**
- You have a negative viral COVID-19 test (antigen test) collected on day 5 or later **and**
- You have not had a fever for at least 24 hours **and**
- Your symptoms are improving

-OR-

You must stay home until:

- At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first started (do not retest at day 10) **and**
- You have not had a fever for at least 24 hours **and**
- Your symptoms are improving

Day 0 is your first day of symptoms. Day 1 is the first full day after your symptoms developed.

For people that test positive still on day 5 should follow the 10 day duration recommendations above and not retest.

Note: If patients have a [condition](#) that severely weakens their immune system or were severely ill in the hospital, they should isolate for a minimum of 20 days.

Ending isolation: if you test positive for COVID-19 and you never develop symptoms

You must stay home until:

- At least 5 days have passed the day your initial positive test was taken **and**
 - You have a negative viral COVID-19 (antigen) test collected on day 5 or later
- OR-

- You must stay home for 10 days after your initial positive test was taken. Do not retest at day 10.

Day 0 is the day your positive test was taken. Day 1 is the first full day after your positive test was taken.

For People with EXPOSURE to COVID-19: How Long Do I Quarantine?

What is a Close Contact?

You are a "close contact" if you were exposed to someone who tested positive* for COVID-19 while they were [infectious](#) if:

- a. You were within 6 feet of someone with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- b. You had unprotected contact with body fluids and/or secretions from someone with COVID-19. For example, you were coughed or sneezed on, you shared a drinking cup or eating utensils, you kissed, or you provided care to them without wearing the right protective equipment.

YOU ARE NOT REQUIRED TO QUARANTINE if you are fully vaccinated for COVID-19 and you have been boosted if eligible.

You must still follow the other steps below.

- **QUARANTINE** (for under-vaccinated and un-boosted people that are eligible)
 - You must quarantine (stay home and away from others)
 - You can end quarantine after Day 5 if you have no symptoms and you have a negative diagnostic test that was collected on Day 5 or later.
 - If you do not test, you can end quarantine on Day 10 as long as you do not have symptoms.
- **TEST**
 - You should test immediately. If your test is negative, you should test again on Day 5 after your last exposure.
 - If either test is positive, you must isolate immediately. Follow the instructions at ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation.
- **MONITOR YOUR HEALTH**
 - Monitor your health for symptoms of COVID-19 for 10 days after your last exposure.

- If you develop [symptoms](#), you must isolate and test immediately.
 - if your test is positive, continue to isolate. Follow the instructions at ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation. Your isolation period begins the day that your symptoms start.
 - If your test is negative, you can leave home once you have completed your quarantine period and you have been fever-free for 24 hours.
 - **WEAR A MASK**
 - Wear a well-fitting mask while around others, indoors and outdoors for 10 days after your last exposure.
 - Adults should wear a well-fitting medical grade mask (surgical or respirator).
 - Children should wear a well-fitting, non-cloth mask of multiple layers of non-woven material with a nose wire.
- See ph.lacounty.gov/masks for more information.

We will continue to update this guidance as more information and recommendations are released from public health.

Sincerely,

Sherrill Brown

Medical Director of Infection Prevention