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COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions*

What is the difference between quarantine and isolation?

- Quarantine keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others. A person should quarantine if they have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, unless they have been fully vaccinated. Individuals are considered fully vaccinated two weeks after their second dose in a two-shot series (such as Pfizer or Moderna), or two weeks after the single-dose Johnson & Johnson vaccine.
- Isolation keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home. People who are in isolation should stay home and stay in a specific “sick room” or area and use a separate bathroom if possible.

What is considered a close contact?

- A close contact is someone who was less than 6 feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.

What should I do if I am a close contact?

- If you have been fully vaccinated: you do not need to quarantine but should wear a well-fitting mask around others and watch for symptoms for 10 days from the date of your last close contact. You should get tested at least 5 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- If you have not been vaccinated OR it has been more than 5 months out from your 2nd Moderna/Pfizer vaccine dose or more than 2 months out from your Johnson & Johnson vaccine and you have not received a booster: you should quarantine for 5 days, then wear a mask around others for 5 additional days. You should get tested at least 5 days after you last had close contact with someone with COVID-19 or sooner if you start experiencing symptoms. You should watch for symptoms for 10 days after your last close contact with someone with COVID-19. If you develop symptoms, get tested immediately and isolate until you receive your test results.
- **If you have had confirmed COVID-19 within the past 90 days: you do not need to quarantine but should wear a well-fitting mask around others and watch for symptoms for 10 days from the date of your last close contact.**

Please visit the following link to read more about the CDC’s guidance on isolation and quarantine: [COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation | CDC](#)

What should I do if I tested positive for COVID-19?

- Stay home for at least 5 days and isolate from others in your own home (if possible, stay in a specific “sick room” or area and use a separate bathroom).
- Wear a well-fitted mask if you must be around others for 10 days after positive test.
- Take the following precautions until day 10:
 - Avoid travel
 - Wear a well-fitting mask
 - Avoid being around people who are high risk

- Drink plenty of fluids
- Get rest
- Use over-the-counter medications as needed for symptoms

How long should I isolate for if I tested positive for COVID-19?

- If you have symptoms: end isolation after 5 full days if you are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication) and your symptoms are improving.
- If you DON'T have symptoms: end isolation after at least 5 full days after your positive test.
- If you were severely ill with COVID-19: you should isolate for at least 10 days and consult your provider before ending isolation.
- Calculating isolation: Day 0 is your first day of symptoms or a positive viral test. Day 1 is the first full day after your symptoms developed or your test specimen was collected.

Please visit the following link to read more about the CDC's guidance on isolation and quarantine: [COVID-19 Quarantine and Isolation | CDC](#)

I have tested positive for COVID-19, what symptoms should I monitor for at home?

- Common symptoms that you may experience include fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle/body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea/vomiting, and diarrhea.
- Seek medical attention if you experience: trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, pulse ox < 93%*, pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds depending on skin tone, a fever above 100.4° that does not improve with fever-reducing medication, or any other symptoms that are severe or concerning to you.

* Some people may always have a lower pulse oxygen level. If you have COPD or other chronic respiratory illness, please confirm your pulse oxygen range with your provider.

How can I stay in touch with my provider's office?

- The best way to communicate with your care team or provider for routine or same day needs is through the Coastal Medical Patient Portal. Portal messages are generally answered within 24 hours. Please call your provider's office directly for urgent needs or if you are unable to access the Patient Portal.
- Coastal Medical offers a remote patient monitoring program (RPM) for symptomatic patients who would like to have their symptoms monitored at home. Your care team would send you regularly scheduled text messages to check on your symptoms and concerns and call you directly as needed. Please call or text us at **401-484-1835** if you would like to enroll in RPM for your COVID-19 symptoms.

What can I do if I have a fever or body aches from COVID-19?

- You may manage your fever or pain with over-the-counter medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil), or naproxen (Aleve). Please be sure to follow recommended dosing directions for all over-the-counter medications. Certain medical conditions and prescribed medications may affect your ability to take these medications. Consult your provider or pharmacist if you have questions about if these medications are appropriate for you or how to take them. [Click here to view a guide on Adult Over the Counter Medications.](#)

What can I do if I have a cough or congestion from COVID-19?

- You may manage your cough with over-the-counter medications such as dextromethorphan (Delsym, Robitussin) or guaifenesin (Mucinex). For sinus congestion, you may purchase pseudoephedrine (Sudafed) at the pharmacy counter. Certain medical conditions and prescribed medications may affect your ability to take these

medications. Consult your provider or pharmacist if you have questions about if these medications are appropriate for you or how to take them. Other remedies that may help your symptoms include drinking plenty of fluids to stay hydrated, getting plenty of rest, hot showers, hot tea, and humidifiers. [Click here to view a guide on Adult Over the Counter Medications.](#)

I have tested negative for COVID-19 but I have symptoms, what should I do?

- If you used an at home (rapid) test: isolate away from others and wait at least 24 hours before repeating an at home test. RI Department of Health recommends getting a lab-processed PCR to confirm your results if you have symptoms but received a negative result on a rapid antigen test. Contact your healthcare provider about your symptoms, especially if they worsen.
- If you had a PCR test: you may have received a false negative test and still might have COVID-19. Isolate away from others and contact your healthcare provider about your symptoms, especially if they worsen and about follow-up testing.

Please visit the following link to read more about testing recommendations from the RI Department of Health: <https://covid.ri.gov/testing>

What vaccines are available?

- Pfizer: recommended for ages 12 and up, 2 shots given 3 weeks (21 days) apart
- Pfizer Pediatric: recommended for ages 5-11, 2 shots given 3 weeks (21 days) apart
- Pfizer Pediatric: recommended for ages 6 months-4 years old, 2 shots given 3 weeks (21 days) apart followed by a 3rd dose at least 2 months after the 2nd dose
- Moderna: recommended for ages 18 and up, 2 shots given 4 weeks (28 days) apart
- Moderna Pediatric: recommended for ages 6 months to 5 years old, 2 shots given 4 weeks (28 days) apart
- Johnson & Johnson: recommended for ages 18 and up, one shot

If I am fully vaccinated, when can I my first booster?

If you received:	Who should receive a booster:	When to receive a booster:	Which booster can you receive:
Pfizer-BioNTech	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone 12 years and older	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least 5 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pfizer or Moderna are preferred in most situations• Teens 12–17 years old may only get a Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine booster

Moderna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults 18 years and older 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 5 months after completing your primary COVID-19 vaccination series 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pfizer or Moderna are preferred in most situations
Johnson & Johnson's Janssen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults 18 years and older 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At least 2 months after receiving your J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pfizer- or Moderna are preferred in most situations

Please visit the following link to read more about the CDC's guidance on COVID-19 booster shots: [COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots](#)

If I am fully vaccinated and received my first booster, when can I get my 2nd booster?

- Adults ages 50 years and older or people who are moderately or severely immunocompromised (12 years of age and older) can choose to get a second booster of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna.
- This would be at least 4 months after the first booster.
- For adults ages 18 and older who had received J&J/Janssen COVID-19 vaccine for both their primary dose and booster can choose to get a 2nd booster of either Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna at least 4 months after the first booster.

If I was COVID-19 positive, when can I get my booster?

- You should get a COVID-19 booster vaccine even if you already had COVID-19 but should wait until you are out of isolation and your symptoms have resolved.

Should I get the same vaccine for my booster as I got for my initial vaccine series?

- Eligible individuals may choose which vaccine they receive as a booster dose. The CDC's recommendations now allow for this type of mix and match dosing for booster shots. Please visit the following link to read more about the CDC's guidance on COVID-19 booster shots: [COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Shots](#)

Are there any concerns with the COVID-19 vaccine in pregnancy and breastfeeding?

- The CDC recommends the vaccine and boosters in people who are pregnant, breastfeeding, trying to get pregnant, or might become pregnant in the future. There is currently no evidence that any vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines, cause fertility problems in women or men.

Please visit the following link to read more about the CDC's guidance on COVID-19 vaccines in the setting of pregnancy: [COVID-19 Vaccines While Pregnant or Breastfeeding](#)

Where can I get tested for COVID-19?

- Coastal Medical: Send a portal message (preferred) or contact the office directly (adults and pediatric). Note: symptomatic patients will get rapid and PCR tests.
- RIDOH: Adult and pediatric patients can schedule directly through [Portal.ri.gov](#)
- Walgreens and CVS: Schedule appointment directly through company website
- At home tests can be obtained at many local pharmacies. Note: negative results do not rule out COVID-19, especially if symptomatic. The most accurate results are obtained with a PCR test.

Can I get reimbursed for at home COVID-19 tests?

- Beginning January 15, 2022, over-the-counter COVID-19 tests will be covered for individuals with private health insurance coverage or covered by a group health plan. Insurance companies and health plans are required to cover 8 free over-the-counter at-home tests per covered individual per month. Insurance will either pay for the test up front or you can keep your receipt and submit a claim to your insurance company for reimbursement.

What treatment is available for COVID-19?

- The FDA has granted an emergency use authorization (EUA) for two oral antiviral treatments known as Paxlovid and Molnupiravir and a monoclonal antibody infusion, Bectelovimab. There is a very limited supply of these medications in Rhode Island to be distributed to COVID-19 positive patients at this time. To qualify for this treatment, patients must meet additional criteria determined by the RI Department of Health as outlined below. Please speak with your provider if you are COVID-19 positive and think you may be at high risk for complications. The RI Department of Health Criteria for use of oral antiviral includes medications:
 - Older age (for example ≥ 65 years of age)
 - Obesity, BMI higher than 35
 - Immunosuppressive disease or immunosuppressive treatment
 - Cardiovascular disease (including congenital heart disease) or hypertension
 - Chronic lung diseases (for example, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma [moderate to severe], interstitial lung disease, cystic fibrosis and pulmonary hypertension)
 - Sickle cell disease
 - Neurodevelopmental disorders (for example, cerebral palsy) or other conditions that confer medical complexity (for example, genetic or metabolic syndromes and severe congenital anomalies)
 - Having a medical-related technological dependence (for example, tracheostomy, gastrostomy, or positive pressure ventilation [not related to COVID 19])

What are monoclonal antibodies (mAbs)?

- Monoclonal antibodies are treatments made in a lab to act like natural antibodies to fight against the virus in the body. To be eligible for treatment with a monoclonal antibody, COVID-19 patients must have mild to moderate symptoms that have started in the past 7 days, be over 12 years of age (weigh at least 88 pounds), or take medication or have medical conditions that suppress the immune system, and alternative COVID-19 treatment options are either not accessible or clinically appropriate (as of 5/18/2022). These treatments are available at select sites in Rhode Island and are administered as an intravenous (IV) infusion.

Do I need antibody testing?

- Antibody testing does not show if someone has a current infection, and it is not effective at showing if someone has immunity towards COVID-19. Therefore, it is not recommended and generally only used in clinical research at this time.

What is Ivermectin? Can it be used for COVID-19?

- Ivermectin is a prescription medication used to treat certain parasitic infections. Ivermectin is sometimes used to prevent heartworm disease and treat certain parasites in animals, but these products are very different than those approved for human use. The FDA has not approved or authorized any form of ivermectin for the prevention or treatment of COVID-19 because it has not yet been proven safe or effective. Ivermectin may interact with other medications and cause serious issues when taken incorrectly. It is important to only take this medication if a doctor prescribes it for you, and to take it exactly as prescribed.

Please visit the following link to read more information about Ivermectin from the FDA: [Why You Should Not Use Ivermectin to Treat or Prevent COVID-19 | FDA](#)

Are there vitamins or supplements I can take to prevent or treat COVID-19?

- Currently, no vitamins or supplements have been shown to reduce the risk of infection from the COVID-19 virus. The best way to prevent infection is by social distancing, wearing a mask, and practicing good hand hygiene. No vitamins or supplements are recommended for the treatment of COVID-19.

How do I get an out of work note?

- If tested through, or in contact with, the RI Department of Health (RIDOH), visit the following site:
<https://health.ri.gov/publications/instructions/how-to-submit-quarantine-letter-requests.pdf>
- If tested through Coastal Medical: send a portal message to office or call the office directly.

Do I need a pulse oximeter?

- A pulse oximeter is a small device that shows numbers indicating your blood oxygen level and heart rate when placed on your finger. It is recommended to monitor your pulse oxygen levels at home when you are recovering from COVID-19 and have underlying health conditions. Checking your oxygen levels at home can provide reassurance as symptoms of shortness of breath can change during your illness. Monitoring for drops in your levels can help you to know when to reach out to your healthcare provider for help or care. If your number drops below 93%*, please call your provider.

* Some people may always have a lower pulse oxygen level. If you have COPD or other chronic respiratory illness, please confirm your pulse oxygen level goal with your provider

How do I use a pulse oximeter?

- Please keep the following recommendations in mind when using a pulse oximeter:
 - Take readings indoors, while sitting at rest, limited movement and breathing is at a comfortable level.
 - Avoid talking for a few minutes before testing.
 - Apply the device to your index or middle finger.
 - Device should fit securely to finger.
 - Make sure display screen faces up.
 - Observe readings for 30-60 seconds before recording your most common reading.
 - Measure and record 2-3 times per day.
 - Remove nail polish from testing finger.
 - If your hands are cold, warm them prior to testing.

Note: It's possible to get false readings from an oximeter so it is important to track your levels and not react to a single reading.

Where can I find additional COVID-19 information?

- Please visit the following websites for additional information regarding COVID-19:
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>
 - <https://www.lifespan.org/locations/coastal-medical/covid>
 - <https://covid.ri.gov>

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