

HOME COVID-19



## COVID-19

[COVID-19 Home](#)

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

Updated Aug. 24, 2022

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

## About Being Exposed to COVID-19



### Isolation and Exposure Calculator

A tool to help you determine if you need to isolate or take other steps to prevent spreading COVID-19.

[Isolation & Exposure](#)

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.



**Watch ASL Video:** [What to do if you've been exposed to COVID-19](#)

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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.

## Archived Content

Search for and find historical COVID-19 pages and files. Please note the content on these pages and files is no longer being updated and may be out of date.

- Visit [archive.cdc.gov](https://archive.cdc.gov) for a historical snapshot of the COVID-19 website, capturing the end of the Federal Public Health Emergency on June 28, 2023.
- Visit the [dynamic COVID-19 collection](#) to search the COVID-19 website as far back as July 30, 2021.

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