

How to Stay Safe After a COVID-19 Exposure

If you have been notified that you were exposed to COVID-19, this guide will help you with your next steps.



STEP 1: STAY HOME

Because you recently had [close contact](#) with someone who tested positive for COVID-19, you should stay home to [quarantine](#) for at least 10 days after the date of your last exposure. This means you should not leave your home for any reason (including work, social gatherings or shopping), except to be [tested or to seek medical care](#). This [guide](#) can help you determine how you may be able to end quarantine earlier and provides information to help you get through the quarantine period.

You should continue to stay home for your entire quarantine period since you could still develop infection and be contagious (able to pass the infection to others) later. **It is possible to be infected and be contagious but have no signs or symptoms.**



STEP 2: SYMPTOMS AND GETTING TESTED

Get tested 7 to 10 days after your last exposure. You should wait at least 7 days because getting tested too early could produce misleading results. To find out how to get tested, contact your healthcare provider, local health department or use this [testing locator](#).

While you wait for your test results, stay home. To keep family members safe, everyone should wear a mask in the home, practice good hand hygiene, disinfect surfaces often and stay 6 feet apart. Avoid close contact with other people in your home.

It is important to monitor yourself for symptoms for a full 14 days after your last exposure. If you develop [symptoms](#), get [tested](#) for COVID-19 right away and [isolate](#) (see more about isolation below in Step 3). Use this [COVID-19 symptom checker](#) to check your symptoms.



STEP 3: IF YOU TEST POSITIVE

If you test positive, you should [isolate](#), wear a mask and stay away from others, including in your own home, when feasible. Stay in a room by yourself and use a separate bathroom. Increasing ventilation, such as by keeping windows open (when it is safe to do so) can improve indoor air quality and reduce air contaminants such as viruses including the one that causes COVID-19.

If you test positive for COVID-19 you should notify your close contacts that they have been exposed. For information on how to notify your close contacts, use [this guide](#) or go to this website: <https://tellyourcontacts.org>.



RESOURCES FOR YOU

This can be a stressful time. It is important that you get the help you need. Be sure to call your doctor if you have questions about your COVID-19 diagnosis. Please stay home away from others and wear a mask. Learn more about how to [isolate](#) safely at home. Feeling anxious or down? Learn more about how to [cope](#) with COVID-19.

If you have any of these emergency warning signs, you should call 911 or go to the hospital right away:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

Helpful resources for you:

[COVID Home Care Instructions](#)

[CDC COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions](#)

[CDC Isolation Instructions](#)

[CDC What to do if you are sick](#)