

Interim Guidance for Isolation for COVID-19

Last reviewed July 28, 2020. Last updated July 19, 2020

COVID-19 status	Guidance for patients	Guidance for household members
Confirmed case (laboratory test positive) in hospital	Isolation according to hospital procedures	- Isolation at home for 14 days from last exposure to COVID-19 patient without using recommended precautions. - Monitor yourself for symptoms and call your provider immediately if you develop cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, or other COVID-19 symptoms¹.
Confirmed case (laboratory test positive) at home	Isolation period will be at least 10 days, or possibly longer depending on the course of illness.² Discontinue home isolation under the following conditions: - Ten days after illness onset AND - No fever for at least 24 hours (without use of fever-reducing medication) AND - Symptom improvement For persons who never develop symptoms, discontinue isolation ten days after the first positive PCR test (date of swab collection).	- Isolation at home 14 days from when household precautions were in use. - Monitor yourself for symptoms and call your provider immediately if you develop cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or other COVID-19 symptoms¹. - If you become sick with COVID-19 symptoms¹, isolate at home until - Ten days after illness onset AND - No fever for at least 24 hours (without use of fever-reducing medication) AND - Symptom improvement
Waiting for test results	Isolation at home using recommended precautions until test results are received.	Self-observation
Sick with COVID-19 symptoms* but not tested (no known exposure to COVID-19)	Stay home except to get COVID-19 testing or other medical care. Call ahead before visiting your doctor.	Self-observation
Health care worker (HCW) with confirmed or suspected COVID-19	Exclude from work until: - Ten days after illness onset AND - No fever for at least 24 hours (without use of fever-reducing medication) - Symptom improvement For HCWs who never develop symptoms, exclude from work until ten days after the first positive PCR test (date of swab collection). For HCWs with severe illness or who are immunocompromised, exclude from work until 20 days after illness onset. A test-based strategy is no longer recommended.³	- Isolation at home 14 days from when household precautions were in use. - Monitor yourself for symptoms and call your provider immediately if you develop cough, shortness of breath, or other COVID-19 symptoms¹. - If you become sick with COVID-19 symptoms¹, isolate at home until - Ten days after illness onset AND - No fever for at least 24 hours (without use of fever-reducing medication) - Symptom improvement

¹COVID-19 symptoms include fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

²A small number of people with severe illness may shed infectious virus beyond 10 days that may warrant extending duration of isolation for up to 20 days after symptom onset; consider consultation with infection control experts.

³For persons previously diagnosed with symptomatic COVID-19 who remain asymptomatic after recovery, retesting is not recommended within 3 months after the date of symptom onset. An exception is for who people who are severely immunocompromised, for whom a test-based strategy could be considered in consultation with infectious diseases experts.

Household precautions <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html>

- Stay home except to get medical care
- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home. Stay in a specific room and use a separate bathroom if available.
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor
- Wear a facemask when around other people
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Wash your hands often
- Avoid sharing personal items such as dishes, towels, and bedding.
- Clean 'high-touch' surfaces every day. These include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, phones, keyboards, etc. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe.
- Monitor your symptoms. Seek prompt medical attention if your illness is worsening. Call your provider and let them know you have COVID-19 before seeking care. If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify dispatch that you have COVID-19.

Resources

CDC what to do if you're sick: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

CDC guidance for discontinuing isolation of hospitalized patients: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-hospitalized-patients.html>

CDC guidance for discontinuing isolation for persons with COVID-19 not in healthcare settings: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html>

CDC guidance for symptom-based strategy to discontinue isolation for adults with COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/strategy-discontinue-isolation.html>

CDC guidance for health care workers with potential exposure to COVID-19 in a healthcare setting: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/guidance-risk-assessment-hcp.html>

Return to work criteria for healthcare personnel with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 exposure: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/hcp-return-work.html>

CDC guidance on safety practices for critical infrastructure workers who might have been exposed to COVID-19: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/critical-workers/implementing-safety-practices.html>