

# COVID-19: Home Isolation & Quarantine Guidelines

## You may need to be tested for COVID-19 because:

- (1) you have symptoms of COVID-19 illness,
- (2) you are a [Close Contact](#) to someone who has COVID-19 or
- (3) you are in a job or situation where you are recommended or asked to test.

## What to do while you're waiting for test results:

- (1) If you have any COVID-19 symptoms, **follow the Isolation Steps** on the next page.
- (2) If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms but are a Close Contact and are:
  - (a) **unvaccinated OR vaccinated and booster-eligible but have *not yet received your booster dose***, find the **QUARANTINE PLAN** that matches your situation in the table below and **follow the QUARANTINE STEPS** on the next page.
  - (b) **boosted OR vaccinated but not yet booster-eligible**, you do not need to follow Isolation or Quarantine Steps while waiting for your test results.
- (3) If you do not have COVID-19 symptoms AND are not a Close Contact, you do not need to follow Isolation or Quarantine Steps while waiting for your test results.

**Close Contact:** A close contact is someone who was within 6 feet of a person who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes during the time the COVID-19 infection can be passed to others. This is from 48 hours before the person with COVID-19 had symptoms or first tested positive until isolation ends. Learn more [here](#).

## What to do after you get your test results:

- (1) If you test COVID-19 *positive*, **follow the ISOLATION STEPS** on the next page.
- (2) Find the **QUARANTINE PLAN** that matches your situation in the table below and **follow the QUARANTINE STEPS** on the next page.

## COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine Plans<sup>1-5</sup>

Who <sup>1-3?</sup>	What to Do
<b>Persons with COVID-19 symptoms but NO exposure who test <i>negative</i>, regardless of vaccination status.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If test is <b>negative</b>, end isolation once symptoms start getting better AND you have been fever-free for at least 24 hours.</li> </ul>
<b>Persons who test <i>positive</i> for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, previous infection or whether you have symptoms or not:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Isolate</a> and stay home and away from others for <i>at least</i> 5 days.</li> <li>• End isolation after Day 5 <i>IF</i> you feel well or are getting better <i>AND</i> a test (antigen test preferred) collected on Day 5 or later is negative.</li> <li>• Continue to isolate for <i>at least 10 days</i> IF you are unable to test <i>OR</i> your Day 5 test is positive <i>OR</i> you choose not to test.</li> <li>• Whether you test negative or not, if you are not feeling better, continue to isolate until after Day 10 <i>AND</i> until fever-free.</li> <li>• Wear a well-fitting mask around others (even at home) for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings.</li> </ul>
<b>Persons who are <u>exposed</u> to someone with COVID-19 who are unvaccinated OR vaccinated and booster-eligible but have <u>not yet received their booster dose</u>:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Quarantine</a> and stay home for at least 5 days<sup>4</sup>. Count from the day you were last exposed.</li> <li>• Get tested immediately to see if you need to isolate. Get tested again on Day 5.</li> <li>• End quarantine after Day 5 <i>IF</i> you feel well <i>AND</i> a test collected on Day 5 or later is negative.</li> <li>• If unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are not present, quarantine can end after Day 10.</li> <li>• Wear a well-fitting mask around others (even at home) for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings.</li> <li>• If symptoms develop, get tested right away and stay home while awaiting results. Follow instructions based on results.</li> <li>• If you test positive, follow isolation recommendations above.</li> </ul>
<b>Persons who are <u>exposed</u> to someone with COVID-19 who are boosted OR vaccinated but not yet booster-eligible do <u>NOT</u><sup>2</sup> need to quarantine but should still:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get tested immediately to see if you need to isolate. Get tested again on Day 5<sup>5</sup>.</li> <li>• Wear a well-fitting mask around others (even at home) for 10 days, especially in indoor settings.</li> <li>• If you test positive, follow isolation recommendations above.</li> <li>• If symptoms develop, get tested right away and stay home while awaiting results. Follow instructions based on results.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Healthcare workers, patients, and residents in healthcare settings should follow a stricter protocol. Read it at [Guidance on Quarantine and Isolation for Health Care Personnel - AFL 21-08](#).

<sup>2</sup> The above guidance does NOT apply to those living or working in [congregate settings](#) such as jails and shelters.

<sup>3</sup> Persons who work in or attend [school settings](#) should consult [CDPH K-12 Isolation and Quarantine Guidance](#)

<sup>4</sup> In a workplace setting, asymptomatic employees who are fully vaccinated and booster-eligible but not boosted are not required to stay home from work if (1) a negative test is obtained within 3-5 days after last exposure to a case, (2) employee wears a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, and (3) employee continues to have no symptoms. The employee should still follow quarantine guidance above while not at work. This guidance is not applicable to healthcare personnel or staff in congregate settings.

<sup>5</sup> Exposed persons, whether quarantined or not, should consider testing as soon as possible to determine infection status and follow all isolation recommendations above if tested positive. Knowing one is infected early during quarantine enables (a) earlier access to treatment options, if indicated (especially for those that may be at risk for severe illness), and (b) notification of exposed persons ("close contacts") who may also benefit by knowing if they are infected.

## Isolation Steps

- 1 **Isolate** – If you have COVID-19 or you have [symptoms](#) and are waiting for COVID-19 test results, you must **stay home until you are better and will not make others sick**. Watch your symptoms closely and get medical care if you feel worse, especially if you are at a [higher risk of serious illness](#). In addition:
  - Sleep and stay in a separate room
  - Use a separate bathroom if you can
  - Wear a mask, even at home
- 2 Follow [County guidance](#) for isolation:
  - A. **If you test negative on or after 5 days from the date of your positive COVID-19 test or from the date your symptoms started**, you can be with others after:
    - **At least 5 days** isolating, AND,
    - You are fever-free, AND,
    - Other symptoms are getting better.
  - B. Continue to isolate for **at least 10 days** IF you are unable to test OR your Day 5 test is positive OR you choose not to test.
  - C. If you have a weaker immune system or have another illness, your doctor may tell you to isolate for longer.
- 3 **Tell Close Contacts** – People who were in close contact with you should **follow the Quarantine Steps**. Please share this handout with them.



## Quarantine Steps

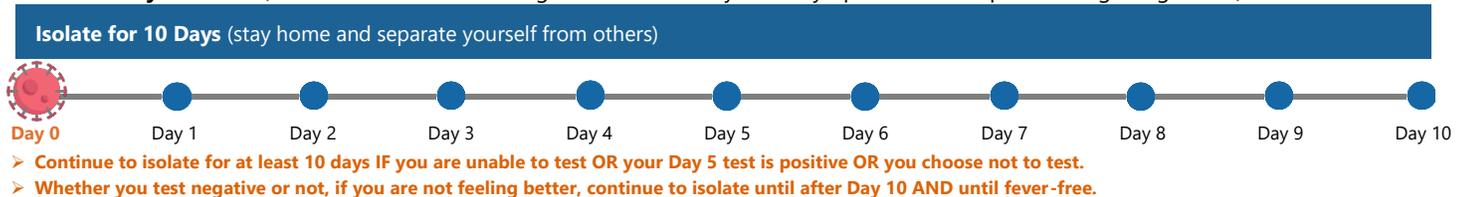
- 1 **Quarantine** – Stay home and separate yourself from others **right away**.
  - A. Ask your employer if you need to follow other steps. Employers can contact the Public Health Department for help.
  - B. Follow the instructions that match your situation (*see all quarantine instructions on page 1*). In general, you do not need to quarantine if you got a [booster shot, or recently vaccinated](#).
- 2 **Get tested:**
  - A. Do you have ongoing *close contact* with someone who has COVID-19 (such as someone who lives in your home)?
    - **If NO**, you should test right away AND on or after Day 5 from your last exposure to the case, even if you got a booster shot, or recently vaccinated.
    - **If YES**, add 5 more days of quarantine after the person with COVID-19 finishes isolation. Get tested 3 times:
      - 1) right away AND
      - 2) 5 days after first exposure to the case AND
      - 3) 5 days after the case finishes isolation.*If all 3 tests are negative, your quarantine can end 5 days after the person with COVID-19 finishes isolation.*
  - B. If any test result is **positive**, follow the **Isolation Steps**.
  - C. If you start to have COVID-19 symptoms during your quarantine, get tested again right away.
- 3 **Watch** for COVID-19 symptoms. If you start to feel sick, **follow the Isolation Steps** and get tested right away.



**Plan a 5-day isolation** (for people who feel well or are getting better and test negative on or after Day 5)



**Plan a 10-day isolation** (if unable to test or choosing not to test on Day 5 and symptoms are not present or getting better)



**Plan a 5-day quarantine** (for people who feel well and test negative on or after Day 5)



**Isolation:**  
Day your symptoms started or day positive COVID-19 test was collected (use earlier day)

**Quarantine:**  
Day of last exposure to person with COVID-19

☆ : Shows the first possible day quarantine can end

❖ Note: Wear a well-fitting mask around others (even at home) for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings.

# I Tested Positive for COVID-19

What do I do?



## ISOLATION



**Stay home for at least 5 days.**

Test again on or after Day 5 using an antigen test. Wear a mask for 10 days.

Do you have symptoms at Day 5?

YES

NO

Did you get tested on or after Day 5?

NO

YES

Was your test positive?

YES

NO



**Continue to stay home  
for at least 10 days\***



**End isolation after  
Day 5. Wear a mask  
for a full 10 days.**

\*Visit [StayHomeSCC.org](https://www.stayhome.scc.org) for more details on what to do.

# I Am A Confirmed Close Contact to Someone

with COVID-19, what do I do?



## QUARANTINE

Do you have symptoms?

**YES**

Follow **SYMPTOMS** guidance

**NO**

Are you boosted?

OR

Are you vaccinated but not yet booster-eligible?

**YES**

**NO**

**You DO NOT need to quarantine, but...**  
Get tested by Day 5.  
Wear a mask for 10 days.

Are you otherwise fully vaccinated?

**YES**

**NO**

**You can go back to work, but stay home otherwise for at least 5 days, and...**  
Get tested by Day 5.  
Wear a mask for 10 days.

**Stay home for at least 5 days**

Get tested by Day 5 to see if you need to isolate.

Did you get tested on or after Day 5?

**YES**

**NO**

**Stay home for at least 10 days**

Was any test positive?

**YES**

**NO**

Follow **ISOLATION** guidance

Do you have symptoms?

**YES**

**Stay home until fever-free and other symptoms are improving.**

**NO**

**End quarantine after Day 5**

# I Developed Symptoms of COVID-19

What do I do?



## SYMPTOMS



**GO HOME  
RIGHT AWAY.**

Get tested and stay home  
until you get your results.

Did you test positive?

**YES**

**NO**

Follow ISOLATION guidance

Are you fever-free and are  
your symptoms improving?

**YES**

**NO**

Are you a close contact?

**YES**

**NO**

Follow QUARANTINE guidance

You can go back to  
work or school



**Stay home at least until...**

Fever free and other  
symptoms are improving.

Visit [StayHomeSCC.org](https://www.stayhome.scc.org) for more details on what to do.

