

COVID-19 Isolation Guidance

When should I isolate?

Regardless of vaccination status, you should isolate from others when you test positive for COVID-19. You should also isolate if you are sick and suspect that you have COVID-19 but do not yet have test results.

When you have COVID-19, isolation is counted in days, as follows:

If you had no symptoms:

- Day 0 is the day you were tested (not the day you received your positive test result)
- Day 1 is the first full day following the day you were tested
- If you develop symptoms within 10 days of when you were tested, consult your healthcare provider

If you had symptoms:

- Day 0 of isolation is the day symptoms began, regardless of when you tested positive
- Day 1 is the first full day after the day your symptoms started

How do I isolate?

If you test positive for COVID-19, stay home for at least 5 days and isolate from others in your home. You are likely most infectious during these first 5 days.

- Do not travel.
- Stay home and separate from others as much as possible.
- Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Take steps to improve ventilation at home, if possible.
- Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- Monitor your symptoms. If you have an emergency warning sign (like trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately.
- Wear a high-quality mask if you must be around others at home and in public.
- Do not go places where you are unable to wear a mask.

When can I end isolation?

End isolation based on how serious your COVID-19 symptoms were.

If you have no symptoms:

- You may end isolation after day 5 and continue to wear a high quality mask or respirator through day 10.

If you had symptoms:

- You may end isolation after day 5 and continue to wear a high quality mask or respirator through day 10 if:
 - You are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication)
 - Your symptoms are improving
- If you still have fever or your other symptoms have not improved, continue to isolate until they improve.
- If you had moderate illness (if you experienced shortness of breath or had difficulty breathing), or severe illness (you were hospitalized) due to COVID-19, or you have a weakened immune system, you need to isolate through day 10.
- If you had severe illness or have a weakened immune system, consult your doctor before ending isolation. Ending isolation without a viral test may not be an option for you.
- If you are unsure if your symptoms are moderate or severe or if you have a weakened immune system, talk to a healthcare provider for further guidance.

When can I stop wearing a mask?

After you have ended isolation, when you are feeling better (no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and symptoms improving):

- Wear your mask through day 10.

OR

- If you have access to antigen tests, you can use them after day 5. With two negative tests in a row 48 hours apart, you may remove your mask sooner than day 10 (but no sooner than day 6).



Note: If your antigen test results are positive, you may still be infectious. You should continue wearing a mask and wait at least 48 hours before taking another test. Continue taking antigen tests at least 48 hours apart until you have two negative results in a row. This may mean you need to continue wearing a mask and testing beyond day 10.