What to do if you have COVID-19 symptoms

This decision tree is for the general public and non-health care settings, such as schools and child cares.

If you have one or more of these new, changed, or worsening symptoms:
- Fever (≥100.4°F) or chills
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Muscle or body aches
- Loss of taste or smell
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Cough

Stay home and test for COVID-19 or see a healthcare provider

You test POSITIVE for COVID-19
- Stay home

You do not get tested
- Isolate at home
  - You can leave isolation after 5 days have passed since symptoms first appeared if:
    - You have had no fever within the past 24 hours (without medication)
    - Your symptoms have improved
  - Notify people who have been exposed to you and refer them to Tree 2.

When resuming normal activities days 6–10:
- Wear a mask around others at home and in public
- Avoid people who are immunocompromised, health care settings and other high-risk settings
- Refer to What to do if you test positive for COVID-19 for more information, such as:
  - what to do in certain congregate settings
  - how to use antigen testing to determine when to leave isolation and remove your mask

You test NEGATIVE for COVID-19
- Stay home
  - Consider retesting every 24–48 hours through at least 5 days after your symptoms started.
  - Resume normal activities when:
    - You have had no fever within the past 24 hours (without medication)
    - Your symptoms have improved

You received a different diagnosis from a healthcare provider
- See Tree 2

Were you exposed to COVID-19?
- NO
  - You received a different diagnosis from a healthcare provider
  - Stay home
    - Resume normal activities if:
      - You have had no fever within the past 24 hours (without medication)
      - Your symptoms have improved

- YES
  - You test NEGATIVE for COVID-19
  - Stay home
  - You received a different diagnosis from a healthcare provider
  - See Tree 2

What to do if you test positive for COVID-19

If the person is under the age of two and ONLY has this symptom, testing and isolation are not required. If the child’s symptoms worsen or persist beyond 5 days, contact a health care provider.

Exposed to COVID-19: someone who was within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for more than 15 minutes within a 24-hour period during the case’s contagious period. The definition of a close contact may vary in some situations.

If you cannot wear a well-fitting mask, you should complete a full 10-day isolation at home.

See Self-Testing Guidance for the Public for additional information about using repeat testing if you test negative. If you tested negative with a molecular laboratory test (e.g., PCR), you do not need to repeat testing.
What to do if you have been exposed to COVID-19

This decision tree is for the general public and non-health care settings, such as schools and child cares.

If you have been exposed to COVID-19, do you have symptoms?

YES

Stay home and immediately test for COVID-19

You test NEGATIVE for COVID-19

Stay home

- Consider retesting every 24–48 hours through at least 5 days after your symptoms started.
- Wear a mask if you must be around others while you are sick or through 10 days after your last exposure, whichever is longer.
- Resume normal activities when:
  » You have had no fever within the past 24 hours (without medication)
  AND
  » Your symptoms have improved

See What to do if you were potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19 for more information.

TEST 3–5 DAYS AFTER YOUR EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

NO

Test 3–5 days after your exposure to COVID-19

You test POSITIVE for COVID-19

See Tree 1 AND What to do if you test positive for COVID-19

You test NEGATIVE for COVID-19

Re-test and take precautions

- Consider re-testing 24–48 hours after your first test.
- For 10 days after your last exposure:
  » Wear a mask when you are around others indoors
  » Do not go places you are unable to wear a mask
  » Monitor for symptoms
  » Avoid people at high risk for severe disease

See What to do if you were potentially exposed to someone with COVID-19 for more information.

1 Exposed to COVID-19: someone who was within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for more than 15 minutes within a 24-hour period during the case’s contagious period. The definition of a close contact may vary in some situations.

2 If you tested positive in the past 90 days and have symptoms of COVID-19, use an antigen test (not a PCR test).

3 If you have tested positive in the past 30 days and recovered and do not have symptoms, testing again for COVID-19 is not recommended. You should, however, wear a well-fitting and high-quality mask around others, not go places you cannot wear a mask, monitor for symptoms, and avoid people at high risk for severe disease for 10 days after your last exposure.

4 If you tested positive in the past 30–90 days, use an antigen test (not a PCR test).

5 See Self-Testing Guidance for the Public for additional information about using repeat testing if you test negative. If you tested negative with a molecular laboratory test (e.g., PCR), you do not need to repeat testing.