



# WHEN IS IT SAFE TO BE AROUND OTHERS: ISOLATION AND WHEN TO END ISOLATION\*

6/15/22



## If you have confirmed or suspected COVID-19, you should isolate (stay home and away from others)

- This applies when you have a **positive** COVID-19 test – even if you have been vaccinated and even if you do not have **symptoms**. It also applies to when you have **symptoms** and are waiting on a test result or are unable to get tested.
- Stay home for at least **5 days** (Days 0–5)
  - If you **have** symptoms, count the day that your first symptom appeared as **Day 0**
  - If you do **not have** symptoms, count the day that you got tested as **Day 0**
- **During isolation at home:**
  - **Monitor** your health and contact your healthcare provider if your **symptoms** worsen
  - **Separate** yourself from other people and pets as much as possible
  - **Wear** a **well-fitting mask** if you cannot separate from others
  - **Stay** in a separate “sick room” and use a separate bathroom, if possible
  - **Do not** go to public settings or travel
  - If you are able and willing to get tested, get tested with an antigen test on or soon after **Day 5**. If your test is positive, stay home through **Day 10**. If your test is negative, you may be able to end your isolation after **Day 5**.



## If you have **COVID-19 symptoms**, you can end isolation (leave your home) after Day 5 if these things have happened:

- **At least 5 full days** have passed since symptoms first appeared, **and**
- You are **fever-free** for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication, **and**
- Your **other symptoms** have improved
  - *Note that **loss of taste and smell** might persist for weeks or months and this should not delay the end of isolation.*



## If you did not have **COVID-19 symptoms**, you can end isolation (leave your home) after Day 5 if this has happened:

- **At least 5 full days** have passed since you were tested



## If you end isolation after Day 5, you should still follow these steps on Days 6–10:

- **Wear** a **well-fitting mask** around others at home and in public. If you cannot wear a mask around others, continue to isolate at home until **Day 10**.
- **Do not** travel, avoid people who have **weakened immune systems or who are at high risk for severe COVID-19**, avoid places where you are unable to wear a mask, and avoid other people when you are eating.

\*Based on CDC guidance for **Quarantine and Isolation**. This VDH guidance applies to general community settings, including K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and workplaces. Child care facilities may apply this guidance for children ages 2 years and older and staff who can consistently and correctly wear well-fitting masks. It does not apply to healthcare facilities or high-risk congregate settings (e.g., correctional and detention facilities, homeless shelters, or cruise ships). People with severe COVID-19 or weakened immune systems might need to isolate (stay home) longer than 10 days. They should talk with their healthcare provider about when it is safe to be around others.



# WHEN IS IT SAFE TO BE AROUND OTHERS: QUARANTINE AND WHEN TO END QUARANTINE\*

6/15/22



If you had **close contact** with a person who has COVID-19 while they were contagious, you should take steps to protect yourself and others for 10 days after the close contact. You may need to quarantine (stay home and away from others).

## Close contact means

- Being within **6 feet** of a person who has COVID-19 for a total of **15 minutes** or more over a **24-hour** period or
- Having **exposure** to respiratory secretions (e.g., being coughed or sneezed on; sharing a drinking glass or utensils; kissing) from a **person** who has COVID-19.
- **Exception for close contact:** In **K-12** settings, a student who is within **3 to 6 feet** of an infected student is **not** considered a close contact as long as both students wore well-fitting masks the entire time. This exception may also be applied to school buses if seating charts are documented and adherence to seating assignments and mask use is verified.



## You do not need to quarantine after close contact if you:

- Are **up to date** with your COVID-19 vaccines.
- Had COVID-19 within the **last 6 months** (you tested positive using a **viral test**).



## Count the last close contact date as Day 0 and take these steps on Days 0–10:

- **Monitor** your health for **COVID-19 symptoms**. If you develop symptoms, get tested with a viral test (**antigen** or PCR test) and follow isolation guidance.



## You need to quarantine after close contact if you:

- Are **not up to date** with your COVID-19 vaccines. This includes people who are **not vaccinated**.\*

*\*Schools may consider forgoing quarantine for students aged 5-11 years who completed their **primary vaccine series** but have not yet received all **eligible boosters**. However, starting with the beginning of the 2022-2023 academic school year, all students should follow general **VDH Quarantine Guidance**, and should quarantine if they are not up to date on COVID-19 vaccines (including booster doses, when eligible).*



## Follow the steps listed above and also these:

- **Quarantine (stay home)** and separate yourself from other people and pets as much as possible for at least **5 days** (Days 0–5) after your last exposure.
- **Get tested** on or soon after Day 5, if possible. If your test is positive, follow the isolation guidance.
- **You can end quarantine (leave your home) after Day 5** if you have no **symptoms** and can wear a mask when around others for Days 6–10. If you cannot wear a mask around others, quarantine at home until Day 10.
- **If you end quarantine after Day 5**, you should **avoid** areas where you **cannot** wear a mask, **avoid** people with **weakened immune systems or who are at high risk for severe COVID-19**, **avoid** other people when you are eating, and **avoid** travel for Days 6–10.



# WHEN IS IT SAFE TO BE AROUND OTHERS: QUARANTINE AND WHEN TO END QUARANTINE\*

6/15/22

## Notes about Isolation and Quarantine

### When to get tested and what kind of test

- If you are able and willing to get tested, getting tested on **Day 5** of isolation or quarantine is preferred. Getting tested soon after Day 5 is also acceptable.
- For people **isolating** at home, an **antigen test** is recommended. For people **quarantining** at home, an **antigen test** or **PCR test** is recommended.

## Special Situations for Quarantine

### Household close contacts or caregivers who cannot separate from the person with COVID-19 who is in isolation at home

- While someone is isolating at home, try to **minimize** close contact with others in the household as much as possible. This includes having the person with COVID-19 in a separate bedroom and using a separate bathroom if possible, staying at least **6 feet** apart, minimizing time spent with each other, wearing well-fitted masks, and improving air flow by opening a window.
- If a household member has **close contact** with the person isolating at home during their **5-day** isolation, then the household member needs to take steps to protect themselves and might need to quarantine. **Count** the date of last contact as Day 0 and follow the quarantine guidance on the previous page.
- Close contacts who are **not up to date** with vaccines should get tested at least 5 days after the end of isolation of the infected person who lives with them. Close contacts who are **up to date** with vaccines can consider getting tested at least **5 days** after their first exposure and at least **5 days** after the end of the infected person's isolation period.

### Healthcare Settings

- The **VDH** guidance for quarantine and isolation does **not** apply to healthcare settings. **CDC** guidance for [healthcare staff](#) and [residents](#) should be followed.

### High-risk congregate settings (correctional and detention facilities, homeless shelters, cruise ships)

- The **VDH** guidance for quarantine and isolation does **not** apply to these settings. [CDC guidance](#) for these settings should be followed.

## Summary of Recent Changes

- **6/15/2022:** On page 2, the time frame for when quarantine and testing are not required if you have recently had COVID-19 was extended from 90 days to 6 months. Removed recommendation for masking and testing for close contacts who are not required to quarantine. Updated age range for schools forgoing quarantine from 12-17 to 5-11 years. On page 3, updated wording for up-to-date close contacts from “should get tested at least 5 days after” to “can consider getting tested ...” Updated link from CDC Quarantine Guidance to VDH Quarantine Guidance.
- **2/1/22:** Updated footnotes on pages 1 and 3 to reflect that shortened isolation and quarantine guidance may be applied in child care facilities for children ages 2 years and older and staff who can consistently and correctly wear well-fitting masks. On page 3, added testing guidance for household close contacts.
- **1/25/22:** On page 1 for people isolating at home who have a positive test, changed wording to stay home from “until Day 10” to “through Day 10.”

\*Based on [CDC guidance for Quarantine and Isolation](#). This VDH guidance applies to general community settings, including K-12 schools, colleges and universities, and workplaces. Child care facilities may apply this guidance for children ages 2 years and older and staff who can consistently and correctly wear well-fitting masks. It does not apply to healthcare facilities or high-risk congregate settings (e.g., correctional and detention facilities, homeless shelters, or cruise ships).