What is a close contact

In general, a close contact means being less than 6 feet from someone for 15 minutes or more throughout a 24-hour period. However, even shorter periods of time or longer distances can result in spread of the virus. The longer someone is close to the person who has COVID-19, and the closer they are, the greater the chance the virus can spread.

If you have close contact with someone who has been told by a doctor, clinic, or hospital that they have COVID-19, follow the appropriate guidance below.

If you are fully vaccinated (it has been two weeks since your last dose of vaccine):

- Get tested three to five days after exposure to someone with COVID-19.
- Wear a mask in public, indoor settings for 14 days following exposure or until your test result is negative.

If you are not fully vaccinated:

- Get tested immediately.
- If the test is negative, test again three to five days after the last time you were close to the person with COVID-19.
- Stay home and away from others.
- If you are at high risk of severe illness, you may be able to get medicine to prevent disease. Refer to COVID-19 Medications: Monoclonal antibodies for more information.

Whether or not you are fully vaccinated:

- If test results are positive or if you start to feel sick, follow recommendations at If You are Sick or Test Positive.
- Follow Recommendations for Wearing Masks.
- Wash your hands often.
- Clean surfaces you touch.

Download the free COVIDaware MN app to get notified if you have been near someone who tests positive for COVID-19.

Separate yourself from others

If you are not fully vaccinated and had close contact with a person with COVID-19 (an exposure), you need to stay home and away from others (quarantine). COVID-19 can take up to 14 days to

make you sick. You can spread COVID-19 to others several days before you have any symptoms, or even if you never have any symptoms, so it is important to separate yourself from others so you don't spread the virus without knowing it. Whether or not you are fully vaccinated, if you start to feel sick, get tested right away and follow the recommendations on [If You Are Sick or Test Positive](#).

- **Stay home.** Do not go to work, school, or any other place outside the home except for testing or needed medical care. Stay away from others, including people who are fully vaccinated.
- **Stay away from people who may be at high-risk** for getting very sick from COVID-19, including older adults, those living in long-term care facilities, and people with health conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, liver disease, severe obesity, or weakened immune systems.
- **Separate yourself from other people in your home.** If possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if you can.
- **Do not use public transportation**, ride-sharing (such as Uber or Lyft), or taxis.
- **Wear a facemask** if around other people. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then wash hands thoroughly.
- **Avoid sharing personal household items**. Do not share food, dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.
- **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

Who does not need to quarantine

1. If you have recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days and have close contact with someone with COVID-19, you do not need to quarantine if **ALL** of the following are true:
   - Your illness was confirmed with a positive lab test in the past 90 days.
   - You have fully recovered.
   - You do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.
2. If you are fully vaccinated and have close contact with someone with COVID-19, you do not need to quarantine if **BOTH** of the following are true:
   - It has been at least two weeks since your last dose of vaccine.
   - You do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

People who live or work in a health care or long-term care facility, have been vaccinated, and have a COVID-19 exposure should refer to guidelines for their situation.

- [COVID-19 Recommendations for Health Care Workers (PDF)](#)

Even after you have recovered from COVID-19 or are fully vaccinated, you should still continue to wash your hands often and follow other precautions. Do not visit people who have had close contact to someone with COVID-19 and are in quarantine. For more information, refer to [CDC: Quarantine and Isolation](#).

How long to keep away from others (quarantine)

If you are not fully vaccinated and have close contact with someone with COVID-19, the safest option is to stay home and away from others for 14 days. In certain situations, you may end your quarantine after 10 days, or after seven days with a negative COVID-19 test result.

Please note that the below recommendations are not universal. Some settings and workplaces, like health care, have different rules about quarantine. Check with your employer.

The safest option: 14-day quarantine

In this situation, your first day of quarantine starts the day after your last contact with the person with COVID-19.

You should stay away from others for 14 days if:

- You live in a building with other people, where it's hard to stay away from others and easy to spread the virus to multiple people, like a long-term care facility.
- You have traveled outside of Minnesota, other than crossing the border for work, study, medical care, or personal safety or security. Under certain conditions, a shortened quarantine may be possible. Note: Your travel "exposure" period ends upon arrival back home.

If someone in your home has COVID-19:

Stay home and away from others for 14 days.

When you live with someone who has COVID-19, you should quarantine during the time they might be contagious (their isolation period), as well as the time you could develop COVID-19. **This may mean you need to quarantine for 24 days or more**.

Your 14-day quarantine period starts the day **after** the person you live with completes their isolation period.

This is usually:
- 10 days from the day their symptoms started.
- If they didn't have symptoms, 10 days from the day they got tested.

If multiple people in your home have COVID-19, your 14-day quarantine period starts after the **last** person has completed their isolation.

How long to stay home provides more information about isolation for people who have COVID-19.

Under certain conditions: 10-day quarantine

Stay home for at least ten days.

Last day of contact with person with COVID-19 → 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 ← Return to normal activities and watch for symptoms

You may consider being around others after 10 days if:

- You have not had any symptoms.
- You have not had a positive test for COVID-19.
- No one in your home has COVID-19.
- You do not live or work in a building where it's hard to stay away from others and easy to spread the virus to multiple people, like a long-term care facility.
- Your contact with someone with COVID-19 had a beginning and an end. For example, your close contact happened at:
  - School
  - Sports event
  - Work
  - Social gathering
  - You traveled outside of Minnesota for reasons other than crossing the border for work, study, medical care, or personal safety or security, and all of the above are true. Note: Your "exposure" period ends upon arrival back home. For more information, visit Protect Yourself and Others: Traveling.

Even after 10 days you should still:

- Watch for symptoms through day 14. If you have any symptoms, stay home, separate yourself from others, and get tested right away, even if you tested negative earlier.
- Continue to wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet away from other people.

Under certain conditions and a negative COVID-19 test: 7-day quarantine

You may consider being around others after seven days only if:

- **You get tested for COVID-19 at least five full days after you had close contact with someone with COVID-19, and the test is negative.**
  - You must get a negative PCR test, not an antigen test or antibody/blood test. Learn more about the differences at Types of COVID-19 Tests.
  - All tests offered at the state's community testing sites are PCR tests. Visit COVID-19 Community Testing Sites to make an appointment.
- You have not had any symptoms.
- You have not had a positive test for COVID-19.
- No one in your home has COVID-19.
- You do not live or work in a building where it's hard to stay away from others and easy to spread the virus to multiple people, like a long-term care facility.
- Your contact with someone with COVID-19 had a beginning and an end. For example, your close contact happened at:
  - School
  - Sports event
  - Work
  - Social gathering
- You traveled outside of Minnesota for reasons other than crossing the border for work, study, medical care, or personal safety or security, and all of the above are true. Note: Your "exposure" period ends upon arrival back home. For more information, visit Protect Yourself and Others: Traveling.

Even after seven days you should still:

- Watch for symptoms through day 14. If you have any symptoms, stay home, separate yourself from others, and get tested, even though you tested negative earlier.

- Continue to wear a mask and stay at least 6 feet away from other people.

Get tested

If you are not fully vaccinated, you should get tested immediately and, if negative, three to five days after the contact. If you are fully vaccinated, you should get tested three to five days after the contact.

- [Find Testing Locations](#)
  Find options for community testing, as well as clinic or hospital locations.
- [COVID-19 Test at Home](#)
  No-cost at-home COVID-19 saliva testing for all Minnesotans.
- [Community Testing](#)
  What to expect at the community testing sites.

Whether you are vaccinated or unvaccinated, if you start to have any symptoms, get tested again.

If your test results are positive, or if you start to feel sick, follow the recommendations on [If You Are Sick or Test Positive](#).

More information

- [Quarantine Guidance for COVID-19 (PDF)](#)
  Detailed version on who needs to quarantine, how to quarantine, and how long to quarantine.
  Updated 8/13/21

- [What to do if you have had close contact with a person with COVID-19 (PDF)](#)
  Updated 8/13/21
  Other languages: Close Contact
- [Case Investigation and Contact Tracing: COVID-19](#)
  Explains the process public health uses to follow where the virus may be spreading in our communities to help slow the spread.