

Isolation and Quarantine Guidance

This document is intended to provide guidance on isolation and quarantine for individuals who test positive or who have been exposed to COVID-19.

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Additional Resources

Here are some additional resources for understanding COVID-19 and support during isolation and quarantine:

- [How To Notify Your Own Contacts They May Have Been Exposed to COVID-19](#)
- Use [TellYourContacts.Org](#) to anonymously notify your contacts.
- [Maryland Department of Health Coronavirus Website](#)
- Visit [Maryland's testing locator page](#) to find a testing site near you.
- [Important information about the COVID-19 vaccine](#)
- Use the [Coronavirus Self Checker](#) to help you make decisions about seeking appropriate medical care. This system is not intended for the diagnosis or treatment of disease, including COVID-19.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, you may be eligible to receive free and potentially life-saving treatments. The key to effective treatment in most cases is to test early and begin treatment as soon as possible after any symptoms begin. For more information visit [Maryland's Monoclonal Antibody Treatment](#) page.

This guidance is based on the latest CDC recommendations, which can be found [here](#).

Persons Who Have Tested Positive for COVID-19 Isolation Guidance

All persons who test positive for COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status, should complete isolation.

What does isolation mean?

- You must stay home except to get medical care.
- You may not go to work or school and should tell your employer or school that you tested positive.
- You should stay in a separate room from other household members and use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- You should wear a well-fitting mask if you have to be in a room with others.

How long will isolation last?

- 5 days from the date your symptoms started OR if you do not have symptoms, 5 days from the date of your positive test.
 - Day 0 is the day your symptoms started OR the day you tested positive if you do not have symptoms.
- At least 24 hours have passed since you have been fever free, without the use of fever reducing medications AND your other symptoms have improved (Loss of taste and smell may persist for weeks or months after recovery and need not delay the end of isolation).

What are emergency warning signs to look out for?

If you have any emergency warning signs for COVID-19, seek medical attention immediately. These include:

- trouble breathing
- persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- new confusion
- inability to wake or stay awake
- pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone
- severe abdominal pain

These are not all possible symptoms. Seek medical attention for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning. Call 911 if you have a medical emergency and tell the operator that you have COVID-19.

What happens after day 5 of isolation?

- If you had no symptoms, or your symptoms resolved:
 - You can discontinue isolation.
 - You should continue to wear a well-fitting mask while around others for an additional 5 days.
 - You should continue to monitor your symptoms for an additional 5 days.
- If you continue to have symptoms:
 - Remain in isolation until 24 hours have passed without a fever and your symptoms have improved.
- If you cannot wear a well-fitting mask while around others through Day 10, you should remain in isolation through Day 10.

What happens if I develop symptoms after day 5?

- Immediately restart isolation.
- Your isolation will start again at Day 1, with Day 1 being the first full day after your symptoms started.

What else can I do to protect those around me?

- We encourage you to notify all your close contacts and ask them to quarantine (for quarantine guidance, see [Page 3](#) and [Page 4](#)).
- Use this [resource](#) to identify who your close contacts are, and we encourage you to confidentially and anonymously notify them of exposure using the [TellYourContacts.org](#) site.

Persons Who Have Been Exposed to COVID-19 Quarantine Guidance: Up To Date on All Vaccine Doses

The following recommendations apply to:

- Children 5-11 years old who have completed the primary series of Pfizer
- Persons 12 years and older who have been boosted
- Persons 12 years and older who have completed the primary series of Pfizer within the last 5 months
- Adults age 18 and older who completed the primary series of Moderna within the last 5 months
- Adults 18 years and older who completed the primary series of J&J within the last 2 months
- Persons with confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days

If any of the above are true AND you have no symptoms, you do not need to quarantine after an exposure, but should follow the below guidance.

If you are experiencing symptoms you must quarantine, see [Page 4](#) for Quarantine Guidance.

What should I do after an exposure?

- Wear a well-fitting mask around others at home and in public for 10 days after the exposure.
- Test on Day 5, if possible; if you test positive you should begin isolation (see [Page 2](#)).
- Monitor for symptoms for 10 days after the exposure.

What does monitoring for symptoms mean?

- Watch for fever, which means feeling feverish or having a measured temperature of 100.4 degrees F or higher.
- If you take fever-reducing medication such as ibuprofen, wait 6 hours after taking your last dose before taking your temperature.

What do I do if I develop symptoms?

If you develop symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, you should:

- Begin isolation immediately (see [Page 2](#) for instructions).
- Get tested.
- Contact your healthcare provider for additional guidance.

Persons Who Have Been Exposed to COVID-19

Quarantine Guidance: Unvaccinated/Not Up To Date on All Vaccine Doses

The following recommendations apply to:

- Persons of all ages who are unvaccinated
- Children 5-11 years old who have not completed the primary series of Pfizer
- Persons 12 years and older who completed the primary series of Pfizer over 5 months ago and are not boosted
- Adults 18 years and older who completed the primary series of Moderna over 5 months ago and are not boosted
- Adults 18 years and older who completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted

If any of the above is true you should quarantine to prevent others from getting infected.

What does quarantine mean?

- You must stay home except to get medical care.
- You may not go to work or school outside the home.
- You should stay in a separate room from other household members and use a separate bathroom.
- If you have to be in a room with others, wear a well-fitting mask that covers your mouth AND nose.

How long will quarantine last?

- 5 days starting from the last date of the exposure. Your last date of exposure is Day 0.

What happens after day 5 of quarantine?

- If you have no symptoms:
 - You can discontinue quarantine.
 - You should continue to wear a well-fitting mask while around others at home and in public for an additional 5 days.
 - You should continue to monitor your symptoms for an additional 5 days.
 - You should get tested, if possible; if you test positive you should begin isolation (see [Page 2](#)).
- If you developed symptoms:
 - Begin isolation immediately (see [Page 2](#)).
 - Get tested.
 - Contact your healthcare provider for additional guidance.

What does monitoring for symptoms mean?

- Watch for fever, which means feeling feverish or having a measured temperature of 100.4 degrees F or higher.
- If you take fever-reducing medication such as ibuprofen, wait 6 hours after taking your last dose before taking your temperature.

What do I do if I develop symptoms?

If you develop symptoms such as fever, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, chills, muscle pain, sore throat, or new loss of taste or smell, contact your healthcare provider immediately. Also, you should:

- Begin isolation immediately (see [Page 2](#))
- Get tested

What do I do if I can't consistently mask while around others?

If you are unable to consistently mask around others then you should quarantine for the full 10 days.