



COVID-19

Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is key to slowing the spread of COVID-19 and helps protect you, your family, and your community.

Updated Oct. 19, 2021

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Contact tracing slows the spread of COVID-19

Contact tracing helps protect you, your family, and your community by:

- Helping people diagnosed with COVID-19 get referrals for services and resources they may need to safely [isolate](#).
- Notifying people who have come into [close contact](#) with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 about their exposure.
- Helping people who were exposed to COVID-19 know what steps to take, depending on their vaccination status. Follow-up may include [testing](#) and [quarantine](#) for unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated people, and testing and wearing a mask for [fully vaccinated](#).

Discussions with public health workers are [confidential](#). This means that your personal and medical information will be kept private and only shared with those who may need to know, like your healthcare provider.

During contact tracing, the health department staff **will not** ask you for:

- Money
- Social Security number
- Bank account information
- Salary information
- Credit card numbers



Answer the Call – Contact Tracing Video

This 1-minute animation video informs the public about contact tracing and why they should answer and respond to a call from a contact tracer.

[English](#)
[Español](#)

What you can expect to happen

What to do if you come into close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19

If you come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 and you are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated.

If you come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 and you are fully vaccinated.

If you come into close contact with someone with COVID-19 and you have tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19 within the past 90 days and recovered (regardless of vaccination status).

You should get tested

You should get tested immediately after finding out you are a close contact. If you need help, health department staff can provide information about the [best time](#) to get a vaccine and resources for [COVID-19 testing](#) and [vaccination](#) your area.

If your test result is negative, get tested again 5-7 days after your last exposure or immediately if symptoms develop.

If your test result is positive, you have COVID-19 and should [isolate](#) for 10 days.

If you are [fully vaccinated](#) and become infected, you can spread the virus to others. Get tested immediately if you develop symptoms. Even if you don't have symptoms, you should get tested 5-7 days after your exposure.

If you need help, health department staff can provide information about the [best time](#) to get a vaccine and resources for [COVID-19 testing](#) in your area.

If your test result is positive, you have COVID-19 and should [isolate](#) for 10 days.

If you develop symptoms, consult with a healthcare professional for testing recommendations.

You should monitor your symptoms

Monitor your [symptoms](#). If you have an [emergency warning sign](#) (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately. Get tested immediately if you develop symptoms.

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Monitor your [symptoms](#). If you have an [emergency warning sign](#) (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately. If you develop symptoms, consult with a healthcare professional for testing recommendations.

You should wear a mask

As a close contact, you should wear a [mask](#) correctly and consistently at all times.

As a close contact, you should wear a [mask](#) indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until your test result is negative.

As a close contact, you should wear a [mask](#) indoors in public for 14 days following exposure.

You should minimize contact with others

As a close contact, you should stay home and away from others ([quarantine](#)) for 14 days from the date of your last known exposure to a person with COVID-19 and follow the quarantine steps.

As a close contact, you do not need to quarantine. You should wear a [mask](#) indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until your test result is negative.

As a close contact, you do not need to quarantine. You should wear a [mask](#) indoors in public for 14 days following exposure.

You may get a call from a healthcare worker or your close contact

A public health worker, other professional, or the person you came into [close contact](#) with, may tell you that you are a close contact and have been

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A public health worker, other professional, or the person you came into [close contact](#) with, may tell you that you are a close contact and have been exposed to COVID-19.

exposed to COVID-19. been exposed to COVID-19.


What to do if you are waiting for a COVID-19 test result/

What to do if you are diagnosed with COVID-19


	If you think you may have COVID-19 and you are waiting for COVID-19 test results	If you are diagnosed with COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19
Stay away from others	<p>Quarantine</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay away from others while waiting for your COVID-19 test result, especially people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19, if possible. • If you are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated and have come into close contact with someone with COVID-19, stay home and away from others for 14 days after your last known exposure (quarantine). 	<p>Isolate</p> <p>Stay at home away from others (isolate), except to get medical care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor your symptoms. If you have an emergency warning sign (including trouble breathing), seek emergency medical care immediately. • Stay in a separate room from other household members, if possible. • Use a separate bathroom, if possible. • Avoid contact with other household members and pets. • Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils. • Wear a mask if you must be around other people inside and outside your household.

Think about your close contacts

While you wait for your COVID-19 test result, think about anyone you have come into [close contact](#) with starting 2 days before your symptoms began (or two days before your test if you do not have symptoms). This information can help with [contact tracing](#) efforts and help slow the spread of COVID-19 in your community.

Use [this resource](#)  to help you think of people you may have been around while you may have had COVID-19.


[Tell your close contacts](#) that you have COVID-19 right away so that they can [quarantine](#) and get tested.

- An infected person can spread COVID-19 starting 2 days before the person has any [symptoms](#) or tests positive. People who have COVID-19 don't always have obvious symptoms.
- A person is still considered a [close contact](#) even if they were wearing a mask while they were around someone with COVID-19.
 - You can call, text, or email your contacts. By letting your [close contacts](#) know they may have been exposed to COVID-19, you are helping to protect everyone.
 - If you would like to stay anonymous, there is also an online tool that allows you to [tell your contacts](#) by sending out emails or text notifications anonymously (tellyourcontacts.org ).
 - There are [exceptions](#) to the close contact definition in K-12 indoor classroom settings

Answer the call If a public health worker from the health department calls you, [answer the call](#) to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in your community.

- Discussions with public health workers are [confidential](#). This means that your personal and medical information will be kept private and only shared with those who may need to know, like your healthcare provider.
- Your name will not be shared with those you came in contact with, even if they ask. The public health worker will only notify people you were in [close contact](#) with that they might have been exposed to COVID-19.
- Public health workers may be able to connect you with other supportive services that can help you isolate or quarantine.

Additional Resources

- › [Contact Tracing Steps Infographic](#)
- › [How to Talk to Your Close Contacts](#) 
- › [Contact Tracing Frequently Asked Questions and Answers](#)
- › [Contact Tracing Easy to Read Messages](#)

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Content source: [National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\), Division of Viral Diseases](#)