

# How to Quarantine

Your child is a close contact of a person who has tested positive for COVID-19. **For this reason, your child should quarantine.** Quarantine is used to keep someone *who might have been exposed to COVID-19* away from others. This helps lower the chance of spreading COVID-19. **People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, and monitor their health.**

## Complete the Quarantine Period

The quarantine period starts the day your child was last exposed to the COVID-19 positive person. **Your child should quarantine even if they feel healthy.** A person can have COVID-19 without feeling sick or having any symptoms, and can still spread it to others.

Per the CDC, a [close contact](#) is “Someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.”

**The CDC notes that a 14-day quarantine is the most protective.** However, the CDC recognizes that in some circumstances a 14-day quarantine can cause financial hardship and personal burdens that may affect physical and mental health. The CDC and Austin Public Health provide options for a shorter quarantine in some cases. See the [How Long to Quarantine](#) flowchart about those options.

## What a Person in Quarantine Should Do

- Stay home after exposure to a person who has COVID-19.
  - Children should not go to school or to child care in person.
  - Do not go to sports practices, games, lessons, or other activities.
- Stay home unless you absolutely need to travel outside your home. If you must leave home:
  - Wear a face covering that covers your nose and mouth
  - Limit contact with others
  - Stay 6 feet away from others
  - Avoid going places where there are many people such as stores and movie theaters
- Do not have visitors in your home.
- Stay away from others, especially people who are at [higher risk](#) for getting very sick from COVID-19, if you can.
- Watch for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 for a full 14 days.
  - [Symptoms](#) include fever (100.0°F or higher), chills, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, trouble breathing, fatigue, headache, congestion or runny nose, muscle or body aches, new loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea.
  - **If you have [emergency warning signs](#) like trouble breathing or chest pain, get emergency medical care immediately.**
- Consult with your healthcare provider and visit the CDC website ([www.cdc.gov/coronavirus](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)) to learn more about COVID-19 and [quarantine](#).
- Find out about free lodging for those who cannot safely self-isolate due to COVID-19 [here](#) under the heading “Isolation Facility.”

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## Symptoms of Coronavirus (COVID-19)

Know the symptoms of COVID-19, which can include the following:



Symptoms can range from mild to severe illness, and appear 2-14 days after you are exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19.

Seek medical care immediately if someone has emergency warning signs of COVID-19.

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

If your child develops symptoms, contact your healthcare provider for further guidance.

Anyone who has been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 **must quarantine**, with the exception of people who:

- are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and have no symptoms or who
- have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past 3 months, recovered, and have no symptoms

## COVID-19: Quarantine vs. Isolation

**QUARANTINE** keeps someone who was in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 away from others.



If you had close contact with a person who has COVID-19

- Stay home until 14 days after your last contact.
- Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from people who are at higher-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.

**ISOLATION** keeps someone who is sick or tested positive for COVID-19 without symptoms away from others, even in their own home.



If you are sick and think or know you have COVID-19

- Stay home until after
  - At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
  - At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication **and**
  - Symptoms have improved

If you tested positive for COVID-19 but do not have symptoms

- Stay home until after
  - 10 days have passed since your positive test

If you live with others, stay in a specific "sick room" or area and away from other people or animals, including pets. Use a separate bathroom, if available.



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[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://cdc.gov/coronavirus)