Guidelines for Minimizing
Contagious Disease in the Community

Staying home when potentially contagious with COVID will reduce the risk of spreading disease. The guidelines in this document can be used by individuals and organizations when they encounter COVID-like symptoms.

Individual with Symptoms

For Individuals

If you develop symptoms that could be caused by COVID take the following steps:

1. Determine the cause of your symptoms. Be evaluated for COVID if…

   - You have **two or more** of the following symptoms:
     - Fever (either a measured, elevated temperature or if you feel feverish)
     - Chills
     - Rigors (shaking or shivering)
     - Myalgia (muscle aches and pain)
     - Headache
     - Sore throat
     - Nausea or vomiting
     - Diarrhea
     - Fatigue
     - Congestion or runny nose

   - You have **at least one** of the following symptoms:
     - Cough
     - Shortness of breath
     - Difficulty breathing
     - New loss of taste or smell OR newly experiencing that food tastes strange or funny

   - Your doctor thinks you should be tested for COVID.

2. Stay home while contagious.

   - Even if you don't have COVID, passing illness to others could make them think they could have COVID.
   - Your doctor can tell you when you will no longer be contagious.

3. Stay away from others in your household as much as possible.

   - This may be difficult to do all the time, especially if you have small children or your child is the sick individual. Do what you can to minimize exposure.

4. If you do not have COVID, get a doctor's note confirming that you can safely return to your normal activities.

5. If you have COVID, follow all public health guidelines about when and how you can safely return to your normal activities.

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Household Member with Symptoms

For Individuals with Sick Household Members

If a household member has symptoms that could be caused by COVID, take the following steps:

1. Determine the cause of their symptoms. Be evaluated for COVID if…

   - They have **two or more** of the following symptoms:
     o Fever (either a measured, elevated temperature or if you feel feverish)
     o Chills
     o Rigors (shaking or shivering)
     o Myalgia (muscle aches and pain)
     o Headache
     o Sore throat
     o Nausea or vomiting
     o Diarrhea
     o Fatigue
     o Congestion or runny nose

   - They have at least one of the following symptoms:
     o Cough
     o Shortness of breath
     o Difficulty breathing
     o New loss of taste or smell OR newly experiencing that food tastes strange or funny

   - Their doctor thinks they should be tested for COVID.

2. If a household member **has to be evaluated** for COVID…

   - If you were *diagnosed* with COVID and *recovered* within the *previous three months*, you may continue your normal activities without restriction, as long as you do not have symptoms.
   - If you are *fully vaccinated* and do not have symptoms, you may continue your normal activities but wear a mask while awaiting results of the evaluation.
   - If you are *NOT* fully vaccinated, stay home while awaiting results of the evaluation.

3. Stay away from the sick household member, as much as possible.

   - This may be difficult to do all the time, especially if your child is the sick individual. Do what you can to minimize exposure.

4. If a household member has COVID, follow all public health guidelines about when and how you can safely return to your normal activities.

5. If a household member is evaluated and does not have COVID, you may return to normal activities. Self-monitor for symptoms and go home if you begin to feel sick.

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For Organizations

Encouraging individuals to follow these guidelines will reduce the risk of spreading disease, whether COVID or another illness. To maximize protection in your organization:

1. If an individual has a household member who has to be evaluated for COVID…

   - Defer attendance by individuals who are not yet fully vaccinated while awaiting results.
   - Ensure fully vaccinated individuals wear a mask, while awaiting results.
   - Individuals who were *diagnosed* with COVID and *recovered* within the *previous 3 months* may continue their normal activities without restriction, as long as they do not have symptoms.

2. If their household member is determined to have COVID, ensure that the individual follows public health guidelines about when and how they can safely return.

3. Encourage flexible policies that support people staying home as needed, so they are not discouraged from following these guidelines.

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Individual Who Has Had Close Contact with a COVID Case

For Individuals Who Have Had Close Contact with a COVID Case

If you have had close contact with a COVID case:

1. Take appropriate precautions…

   - If you were ***diagnosed*** with COVID and ***recovered*** within the ***previous three months***, you may continue your normal activities without restriction, as long as you do not have symptoms.
   - If you are ***fully vaccinated*** and do not have symptoms, you may continue your normal activities but wear a mask for ***at least*** 3 days after your last close contact* with a COVID case.
     - o After 3 days, you may choose to be tested. If you test negative, you may remove your mask where not required. If you test positive, isolate and await final determination from public health about when your isolation will end. Stay home until tested if unable to wear a mask.
     - o If you choose NOT to be tested, wear a mask for ***at least*** 14 days after your last close contact* with a COVID case. Stay home through the 14-day period if unable to wear a mask.
   - If you are ***NOT*** fully vaccinated…
     - o **Most protective strategy**: Stay home and away from others for 14 days after your last close contact* with a COVID case. This is the most protective of public health because it eliminates virtually all risk of spreading disease.
     - o **Alternate strategy**: If unable to follow the most protective strategy, stay home and away from others for 10 days after your last close contact* with a COVID case.
       - ▪ For the remainder of the at-risk period for developing disease (days 11 – 14 after your last close contact), wear a mask and remain 6+ feet away from other individuals. Refrain from activities, like eating out or riding in a car, that either require you to remove your mask or be within 6 feet of other people.
       - ▪ It is strongly advised that you be tested on day 10, to further rule out the possibility of disease.
     - o **Test-based strategy**: If unable to follow either the most protective strategy or the alternate strategy, stay home ***at least*** 7 days after your last close contact* with a COVID case ***AND*** be tested for COVID on or after day 5 after your last close contact*.
       - ▪ On or after day 5 after your last close contact* with a COVID case, you may be tested for COVID. If it is negative you may come out of quarantine on day 8 after your last close contact*. If it is positive, isolate and await final determination from public health about when your isolation will end.
       - ▪ For the remainder of the at-risk period for developing disease (days 8 – 14 after your last close contact), wear a mask and remain 6+ feet away from other individuals. Refrain from activities, like eating out or riding in a car, that either require you to remove your mask or be within 6 feet of other people.

2. Monitor your health and be evaluated for COVID if you develop any COVID symptoms. (See previous fact sheets for a list of COVID symptoms.)

*NOTE: *If you are having ongoing close contact with a COVID case, like you would if the case lives in your household and you are unable to stay apart, your last close contact would not occur until either the COVID case recovered, or the case is able to isolate away from you. Once close contact has stopped, you may begin to track the days that have passed since your last close contact.*

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For Organizations

Encouraging individuals to follow these guidelines will reduce the risk of spreading disease, whether COVID or another illness. To maximize protection in your organization:

1. If an individual has had close contact with a COVID case…

    *   Individuals who recently recovered from COVID
        *   Individuals who were ***diagnosed*** with COVID and ***recovered*** within the ***previous 3 months*** may continue their normal activities without restriction, as long as they do not have symptoms.
    *   Fully vaccinated individuals
        *   Ensure ***fully vaccinated individuals*** wear a mask, through ***at least*** day 3 after their last close contact with a COVID case.
        *   Request evidence of a negative test ***OR*** ensure 14 days have passed since their last close contact with a COVID case before they remove their mask.
        *   Defer attendance of individuals who will not follow masking precautions.
    *   Individuals who are NOT fully vaccinated
        *   Defer attendance by individuals until they fulfill the requirements of one of the three strategies for individuals who have had close contact with a COVID case. For those using a test-based strategy, request evidence of a negative test. Consider implementing the most protective strategy to minimize the risk of illness in your organization.
        *   For the alternate and test-based strategies, support individuals' need for 6+ feet of spacing until 14 days after their last close contact with a COVID case.
        *   Ensure individuals employing the alternate or test-based strategies wear a mask until 14 days after their last close contact with a COVID case.

2. Ensure people immediately go home if they develop illness.

3. Encourage flexible policies that support people staying home as needed, so they are not discouraged from following these guidelines.

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