*COVID-19: Have You or Someone You Know Been* Diagnosed with COVID-19?

[Forward logo](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/forward?path=node/42185) [Facebook logo](http://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/diagnosed.htm&t=COVID-19:%20Have%20You%20or%20Someone%20You%20Know%20Been%20Diagnosed%20with%20COVID-19?%20) [Twitter logo](http://twitter.com/share?url=https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/diagnosed.htm&text=COVID-19:%20Have%20You%20or%20Someone%20You%20Know%20Been%20Diagnosed%20with%20COVID-19?%20) [LinkedIn logo](http://www.linkedin.com/shareArticle?mini=true&url=https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/diagnosed.htm&title=COVID-19:%20Have%20You%20or%20Someone%20You%20Know%20Been%20Diagnosed%20with%20COVID-19?%20&summary=Someone%20who%20is%20sick%20with%20COVID-19%20can%20spread%20it%20to%20others%20from%20two%20days%20before%20they%20show%20any%20symptoms%20until%20a%20few%20days%20after%20they%20recover.%20Not%20everyone%20with%20COVID-19%20will%20get%20sick.%20Those%20who%20have%20been%20diagnosed%20with%20COVID-19,%20but%20never%20had%20symptoms,%20may%20still%20be%20able%20to%20spread%20it%20to%20others.%26nbsp;&source=Wisconsin%20Department%20of%20Health%20Services)

**Someone who is sick with COVID-19 can spread it to others from two days before they show any symptoms until a few days after they recover. Not everyone with COVID-19 will get sick. Those who have been diagnosed with COVID-19, but never had symptoms, may still be able to spread it to others.**

Have you been diagnosed?

**If you have been diagnosed with COVID-19**, even if you don't have symptoms, you will need to separate yourself from other people in your home, also called "isolation," and self-monitor until you are no longer able to spread COVID-19 to others. Your local health department will contact you with specific instructions for how to practice isolation at home and self-monitor, and what your friends and family should do to protect themselves. For more information, see our [What do I do if I am Diagnosed with COVID-19 flyer](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/p-02627.htm).

How do I isolate at home?

* **Stay home**. It is important that you avoid contact with others. We now know that you can spread COVID-19 to others beginning **two days before symptoms start until several days after symptoms start and around one day after you recover**; this is known as the “infectious period.” Even if you never develop any symptoms, you may be able to spread COVID-19 to others.
  + **If you are sick**, you should remain in isolation for:
    - At least 24 hours after you are free of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and other symptoms have improved, **and**
    - At least 10 days after the date you first had symptoms.
    - See our [Isolation release flyer for those who are diagnosed with COVID-19](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02632.pdf).
  + **If you do not have symptoms**, you should remain in isolation for:
    - At least 10 days after your test date.
    - See our [Isolation release flyer for those who are diagnosed with COVID-19, but never felt sick](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02632a.pdf).
  + **Note**: For some people who develop serious illness from COVID-19, a longer period of isolation may be required before it is safe to be around others or go back to work. Your health care provider will make this determination in consultation with your local public health department. See the [CDC Discontinuation of Isolation in Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings(link is external)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html) for additional information*.*
  + For most people, **testing to see when isolation should be completed is not recommended** and may actually extend your isolation period unnecessarily. Testing to see when isolation should be completed may be useful in some people who are severely immunocompromised due to a medical condition or certain medications. Your health care provider will make this determination in consultation with your local public health department. See the[CDC Discontinuation of Isolation in Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings(link is external)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html) for additional information.
* **Take steps to prevent others in your household from getting sick**.
  + Separate yourself from other people in your home.
  + Wear a face mask or covering if you have to be around other people.
  + Cover your coughs and sneezes.
  + Clean your hands often.
  + Avoid sharing personal household items.
  + Clean high-touch surfaces everyday. See our [Cleaning and Disinfecting flyer](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/p-02618.htm). More can be found at: [**CDC COVID-19: Disinfecting your home**(link is external)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/disinfecting-your-home.html).
* **Keep a list of people you had contact with while you were sick**. Your local health department will contact you for a list of all the people you had contact with in the two days before you first felt sick up until after your symptoms resolved, or the two days before you got tested until 10 days after you were tested. This is called “contact tracing” and is one way public health staff identify people who could have been infected. People in your family, and others you had close contact with, will be asked to stay home and monitor their symptoms to make sure they don’t get sick and infect others. More can be found at:[**CDC COVID-19: If you are sick or caring for someone(link is external)**](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/index.html).

How do I self-monitor during isolation?

* **Watch for worsening symptoms.** Seek medical care if your illness worsens or if you develop [emergency warning signs](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/symptoms.htm). Call 911 immediately if you need emergency medical care and tell them that you have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
* **If you were diagnosed, but never felt sick**, monitor for [any symptoms of COVID-19](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/symptoms.htm) that may develop during your isolation period. Report any new symptoms to your local health department, as this may affect your instructions for home isolation. If you previously tested positive for COVID-19 while you were well, you do not need to be tested again if you develop symptoms during your isolation period.

CDC's website has more detailed information about ending isolation specific to certain groups (health care personnel, immunocompromised people). In some circumstances, a test-based strategy for release from isolation may be implemented:

* [Discontinuation of Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 Not in Healthcare Settings(link is external)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/disposition-in-home-patients.html)
* [Ending Home Isolation for Immunocompromised Persons with COVID-19(link is external)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/ending-isolation.html)
* [Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19(link is external)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/return-to-work.html)

Have you had contact with someone who was diagnosed?

If you had **contact with someone who has been diagnosed with COVID-19** (at home, work, school, or anywhere else), you may be at risk of infection. Follow these recommendations for 14 days since your last close contact with someone with COVID-19. It is important to [**self-quarantine and self-monitor**](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02598a.pdf) to protect yourself, your family, and your community. Anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 is encouraged to [get tested](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/testing.htm).

You are a "close contact" if **any** of the following situations happened while you spent time with the person with COVID-19, even if they didn't have symptoms:

* Had direct physical contact with the person (for example, a hug, kiss, or handshake).
* Were within 6 feet of the person for a total of more than 15 minutes in a single day.
* Had contact with the person's respiratory secretions (for example, coughed or sneezed on; contact with a dirty tissue; shared a drinking glass, food, towels, or other personal items).
* Live with the person or stayed overnight for at least one night in a household with the person.

**\*DHS currently recommends that everyone wear a face mask or face covering in public, even if you don't feel sick, to help reduce your risk of spreading COVID-19 to others by blocking respiratory droplets. Wearing a face mask or covering while you spend time with someone with COVID-19, even if the person with COVID-19 was also wearing a mask, likely reduces your risk of getting COVID-19, but may not prevent it entirely. If you and/or the person with COVID-19 was wearing a face mask or covering during any of the above situations, you are still considered a close contact.**

How do I self-quarantine?

* **Stay home as much as possible.** It is important that you avoid others to prevent spreading the infection. **If you live with someone who has COVID-19 and you are at**[**higher risk for serious illness**](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/risks.htm)**, you should find an alternative living arrangement separate from the sick family member, if possible.**
* **Most people should not go to work if they have to be around other people.** Talk with your employer about the possibility of working remotely. Health care workers should contact their employee health for their current policy.
* **Avoid travel.** If travel is absolutely necessary, and you become ill, you may not be able to return home until after you recover. When you get home, you will be asked to continue self-quarantining and self-monitoring for 14 days.
* **Wash your hands often and practice good hygiene.**
* **Go out only if absolutely necessary.** Instead, see if someone can drop off essentials at your house. If you need to go out, limit your travel for essential needs, for example, going to the doctor, getting groceries, or picking up medication. Remember to always wear a cloth face covering.
* **Postpone all nonessential medical appointments until your quarantine is over.** If you have an essential appointment during quarantine, call your doctor about what arrangements can be made.
* **Do not use public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.**
* **Wear a face mask or covering if you have to be around others.**This helps protect others by preventing respiratory droplets from getting into the air.
* **How long do I need to quarantine?** The answer may depend on whether you live with someone who has been diagnosed. Since it may take up to 14 days for you to have symptoms after infection, you should **self-quarantine for 14 days from when you last had contact with the infected person, or for 14 days from when the infected person in your household has recovered.**
  + [Quarantine release flyer for those who had close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02634.pdf).
  + [Quarantine release flyer for those who live with someone who has COVID](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02633.pdf).
  + [Quarantine release flyer for those who live with someone who has COVID, but never got sick](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p02633a.pdf).
* **What if someone in my household is diagnosed?** If someone who lives in your household gets sick or is diagnosed with COVID-19 and is unable to separate from others, all well members of your household need to extend their self-quarantine and self-monitoring for 14 days from the date the last person recovered from their illness.

How do I self-monitor during quarantine?

* **Measure your temperature twice a day, once in the morning and once at night.** If you don't have a thermometer, watch for symptoms of fever like chills or sweats.
* **Watch for cough, difficulty breathing, or other**[**symptoms of COVID-19**](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/symptoms.htm)**.**Write down any symptoms you have and when they begin. Your local health department will give you instructions if they want you to report your symptoms to them regularly through a phone call or email. The [What should I do if I had close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/library/p-02598a.htm) flyer includes a chart you can use to log your daily symptoms.
* **What if I get sick?** If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 during quarantine, isolate yourself from other members of your house, contact your doctor, and ask to be tested. Tell them your symptoms to determine if you need medical care. Do not go to your doctor's office without contacting them first.
  + If you don't have a doctor or are having difficulty reaching your doctor, [complete an online health screening assessment(link is external)](https://www.wihealthconnect.com/), and a licensed health practitioner will contact you.
  + [Community testing sites](https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/testing.htm) are available throughout the state to get yourself tested quickly and easily. While awaiting your test results, take steps to keep yourself and others safe in order to slow the spread of the virus.
  + **If you get tested during your quarantine period and you test negative, you will still need to complete your full 14-day quarantine before it is safe to go back to work or be around others.**

Last Revised: August 7, 2020