

COVID-19 FAQs

Quarantine Guidelines

Q: What is quarantine?

A: Quarantine is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Q: Who needs to quarantine?

A: Anyone who is not fully vaccinated and has been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 should quarantine. You also should quarantine if you return to or are visiting Ohio from a state with a high percentage of positive COVID-19 tests (15% or more of tests positive). For more information and a current list of these high-risk states, visit the [COVID-19 Travel Advisory Page](#).

People who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past three months and recovered do not have to quarantine or get tested again as long as they do not develop new symptoms. People do not have to quarantine if they have been fully vaccinated against the disease and show no symptoms, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Vaccine recipients are considered “fully vaccinated” two weeks after they receive their second dose of the Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine or two weeks after they receive the single-dose Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine. However, if you live in a group setting, like a group home, you should stay away from others for 14 days and get tested, even if don't have symptoms and/or are vaccinated.

Q: What counts as close contact?

A: You have had close contact if:

- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period.
- You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19.
- You had direct physical contact with the person (touched, hugged, or kissed them).
- You shared eating or drinking utensils.
- They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you.

Q: I've already had COVID-19. Do I still have to quarantine if exposed to it again?

A: Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 within the past three months and recovered do not have to quarantine or get tested again as long as they do not develop new symptoms. People who develop symptoms again within three months of their first bout of COVID-19 may need to be tested again if there is no other cause identified for their symptoms, according to the CDC.

[Cases of reinfection](#) of COVID-19 have been reported but are rare. In general, reinfection means a person was infected and got sick once, recovered, and then became infected again. Based on what we know from similar viruses, some reinfections are expected.

All individuals, regardless of whether they have had COVID-19 or not, should continue to take preventative measures, including wearing face coverings over the mouth and nose when in public places or other peoples' homes, staying at least 6 feet away from other people, avoiding crowds and confined spaces, and washing hands frequently.

Q: I have received the COVID-19 vaccine. Do I still need to quarantine if exposed to it?

A: Vaccinated individuals who have been exposed to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to [quarantine](#), according to the CDC, if they meet all of the following criteria:

- The individual is fully vaccinated, meaning it was been at least two weeks following receipt of the second dose in a two-dose vaccine series (Moderna or Pfizer), or at least two weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine (Johnson & Johnson).
- The individual has remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

Individuals who do not meet these criteria should continue to follow current [quarantine guidance](#) after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Also, if you are fully vaccinated but live in a group setting, like a group home, you should stay away from others for 14 days and get tested, even if you don't have symptoms.

Fully vaccinated individuals who do not quarantine should still watch for [symptoms of COVID-19](#) for 14 days following an exposure. If they experience symptoms, they should be clinically evaluated for COVID-19, including SARS-CoV-2 testing, if indicated.

After vaccination, individuals should continue to follow COVID-19 precautions when in public, when visiting with unvaccinated people from multiple other households, and when around unvaccinated people who are at [high risk of getting severely ill](#) from COVID-19. Specific precautions include: wearing a well-fitted mask, staying at least 6 feet from people you don't live with, avoiding medium-sized and large-sized in-person gatherings, and following CDC and health department travel recommendations.

Fully vaccinated people can stop wearing a mask in **specific situations**: when you are indoors with other people who are fully vaccinated; or when you are indoors with unvaccinated people from one other household (for example, visiting with relatives who all live together), unless any unvaccinated people or

anyone they live with have increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19. Fully vaccinated individuals still must adhere to Ohio's mask mandate.

Q: What do I need to do if I am in quarantine?

A: You should:

- Stay home, except to seek medical care, for up to 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19 or 14 days after your last day in a high-risk state.
 - Quarantine can end after seven days if you have no symptoms and you receive a negative test that was taken at least five days after exposure.
 - Quarantine can end after 10 days if you have no symptoms. It is a good idea to get a test (on day eight or later) to confirm you do not have COVID-19.
 - The Ohio Department of Health continues to recommend a 14-day quarantine for many Ohioans, especially if any at-risk populations are involved or there is a risk for high spread based on the setting. The full 14-day period is recommended for people who:
 - Live in, work at, or visit congregate living facilities, such as nursing homes.
 - Work in places with a large number of employees.
 - Spend time in other settings in which COVID-19 could spread extensively.
 - Have contact with people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.
- Stay in a separate room from others in your home, especially anyone who is at high risk for complications. If this is not possible, wear a face covering when in the same room and stay at least 6 feet from others.
- Do not have visitors.
- Watch for fever (100.4 F or higher), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19.
- Follow directions from your local health department.
- If you stop quarantine after seven or 10 days as described above, you should:
 - Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
 - If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.
 - Wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash your hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Q: What if I get a negative test showing I don't have COVID-19?

A: Even if you test negative for COVID-19 or feel healthy, you should stay home (quarantine), since symptoms may appear two to 14 days after exposure to the virus. It could take days before the infection shows up on a lab test.

Q: What if I ended up having a repeat close contact with the person who is sick during my quarantine? What if I have contact with someone else sick with COVID-19? Do I need to restart my quarantine?

A: Yes. You will have to restart your quarantine from the last day you had close contact with anyone who has COVID-19.

Q: What if I live with someone who has COVID-19 and cannot avoid continued close contact?

A: You should avoid contact with others outside the home while the person is sick, and quarantine for seven to 14 days after the person who has COVID-19 meets the criteria to end home isolation.

Updated March 9, 2021.

For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.