

Home Isolation and Quarantine Instructions

What to do when you must stay home to prevent the spread of COVID-19

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If you have COVID-19 or symptoms of COVID-19

Home Isolation Instructions

1. Stay home except to get tested or get medical care.

- You must stay at home while you are contagious.
See SFPDPH's [Isolation and Quarantine](#) webpage for when you can leave home.
- Try to stay away from other people in your home, in case you are infected.
See "[Protecting your loved ones and others in your home.](#)"
- Don't let visitors inside your home, unless you need their help to take care of you. People can leave food, medicine, and other things you need outside your door.
- If you leave home to get tested or get medical care, avoid using public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares (Lyft, Uber) if you can. For more information, see www.sfdcp.org/safertransit.
- If you have COVID-19, you can leave a message at (628) 217-6101 if you need a place to stay away from others, food, financial help, or other help.

2. Get tested if you have symptoms.

- Contact your doctor or the clinic. If you don't have health insurance or a regular doctor, see sf.gov/gettested for places where you can get a free test.

3. If you test positive, tell your close contacts.

Close contacts are people who've been within 6 feet of you for a combined total of 15 minutes or more over 24 hours, starting two days before your symptoms started until you started isolating (if you haven't had symptoms, two days before you were tested).

- Make a list of your close contacts. Questions to ask yourself when making your list:
 - Who lives with you?
 - Have you gone to work or school?
 - Have you gotten together with others (had a meal together, gone out for drinks, exercised with others, gone to a gym, had friends or family over to your house, volunteered, gone to a party)?
 - Have you gone to in-person appointments (the salon, barber, doctor or dentist)?
 - Have you ridden in a car with others (for example, Uber or Lyft)?
 - Have you been inside a church, synagogue, mosque or other place of worship?
- Give your close contacts a copy of the SFPDPH Quarantine Instructions. They are online at <https://www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/covid-guidance/what-to-do-quarantine.pdf>
- You can also tell people anonymously by email or text at www.tellyourcontacts.org. In your message, please include a link to SFPDPH Quarantine Instructions: www.sfdph.org/dph/alerts/covid-guidance/what-to-do-quarantine.pdf
- For more information on how to tell people, see CDC's How to Talk to Your Close Contacts at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/TellYourContacts.pdf>

4. Care for yourself and watch for COVID-19 symptoms.

See the section on "[COVID-19 symptoms](#)" below. Call your doctor if your symptoms get worse, especially you have trouble breathing. For more information, see "[When to get medical care](#)" below.

If you had close contact to someone with COVID-19 and weren't fully vaccinated for COVID-19

Home Quarantine Instructions

If you had close contact with someone who has COVID-19, you may be infected. You could spread the infection to others, even before you develop symptoms or test positive.

1. Stay home except to get tested or get medical care.

- You must stay at home until your quarantine ends. See SFDPH's [Isolation and Quarantine](#) webpage for when you can leave home.
- Try to stay away from other people in your home, in case you are infected.

See "[Protecting your loved ones and others in your home.](#)"

- Don't let visitors inside your home, unless you need help to take care of you. People can leave food, medicine, and other things you need outside your door.
- If you leave home to get tested or get medical care, avoid using public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares (Lyft, Uber) if you can. For more information, see www.sfdcp.org/safertransit.
- Call the COVID Resource Center (628) 217-6101 and leave a message if you need a place to quarantine away from other people, or if you need food or other resources.

2. Get tested.

- Get tested **5 days after your last close contact**, if you don't develop symptoms before then.
- Get tested **right away if you have symptoms**.

Contact your doctor or clinic to get tested. If you don't have health insurance or a regular doctor, see sf.gov/gettested.

Stay home until the end of your quarantine, even if your test is negative.

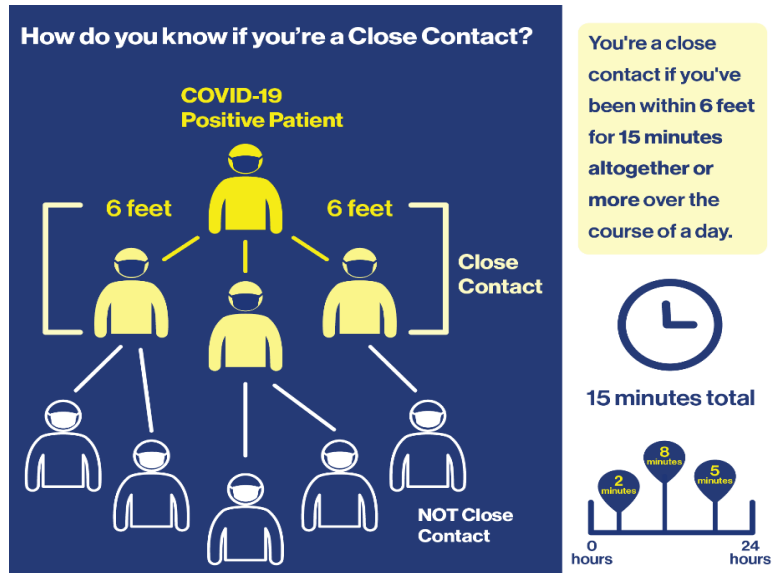
You could still be infected. People can test negative early in their infection.

3. Watch for symptoms of COVID-19.

Get tested if you start to have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), even if you already had a negative COVID-19 test earlier during quarantine. Call your doctor if your symptoms get worse, especially you have trouble breathing. For more information, see "[When to get medical care](#)" below.

Does everyone in my home have to quarantine with me?

No. Only people who had close contact with someone with COVID-19 must quarantine. Other people you live with can leave home, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.



Caring for yourself

COVID-19 symptoms

Symptoms appear 2-14 days after someone is infected, usually 5-6 days later. Symptoms include:

- Fever, chills, or repeated shaking/ shivering
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell. Food and drink may taste or smell different.
- Feeling unusually weak or tired
- Muscle aches
- Headache
- Runny or congested nose
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

Most people with COVID-19 symptoms have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. Take care of yourself. Rest and drink plenty of fluids. Over-the-counter medicine like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) can help relieve fever or pain.

When to get medical care

- **Get medical care if your symptoms get worse**, especially you have trouble breathing. Worrisome signs can include
 - Feeling out of breath, dizzy or light-headed when you're moving around the house, preparing meals, showering or bathing, or doing light housekeeping
 - Dehydration because you are too ill or too tired to eat or drink.
- **Get emergency medical care** immediately for any of these warning signs.
 - Trouble breathing
 - Chest pain or pressure that is not going away
 - Being more confused than usual
 - Trouble waking up or staying awake
 - Blue-ish lips or face

If you need to get tested or get medical care

- Avoid using public transportation, taxis, or rideshares (Lyft, Uber) if you can, so you don't expose other people. If you must use public transit, see www.sfdcp.org/safertransit
- Call ahead to the clinic or emergency room, if you can. Tell them that you have or might have COVID-19. If you call 911, tell the operator that you have or might have COVID-19. This helps health care staff prepare for your arrival.

Protecting your loved ones and others in your home from COVID-19

It can be scary to think that you might give COVID-19 to your family and other people you live with. You can take some simple and important steps to help keep COVID-19 from spreading in your home, even before you get your test result.

Not everyone can take these steps all the time, especially with young children. However, by taking as many steps as you can, as much as you can, you can protect those you love and those living with you.

- **Try to stay away from other people and pets at home**, especially older people and others who are more likely to become very ill from COVID-19. For a list of groups who are at higher risk of severe COVID-19, see sfcdcp.org/vulnerable.
- **Stay in a separate room** if you can, especially when you are sleeping, eating, and other times when your mask is off. Use a separate bathroom if you can.
- **Wear a face mask at home. Have other people wear face masks at home too.** For safety, children under 24 months old and anyone else who cannot take off a mask without help should not wear a mask. You do not need to wear a mask when you are in a separate room that no one else enters.
- **Open windows** if it's safe to do so. The virus that causes COVID-19 can build up in the air indoors, so you'll want to bring in as much fresh air as possible. If you live with children, open windows no wider than 4 inches to prevent falls. You can also put a fan in front of an open window to blow indoor air out of the house. For more information, see sfcdcp.org/ventilation.
- Wash or sanitize your hands often.
- Don't share personal household items, like cups, towels, and utensils.
- Avoid preparing food for other people. If you must prepare food for others, wear a mask while preparing food, and wash your hands with soap beforehand.