

COVID-19, An Update on CDC Guidelines

Current CDC guidelines for testing, isolation and Treating COVID 19



- **COVID-19** (coronavirus disease 2019) is a disease caused by a virus named **SARS-CoV-2**. It can be very contagious and spreads quickly. **Over one million people have died from COVID-19 in the United States.**
- **COVID-19** most often causes respiratory symptoms that can feel much like a cold, the flu, or pneumonia.
- **COVID-19** may attack more than your lungs and respiratory system. Other parts of your body may also be affected by the disease. Most people with COVID-19 have mild symptoms, but some people become severely ill.
- **People with COVID-19** have had a wide range of symptoms reported – ranging from mild symptoms to severe illness. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone can have mild to severe symptoms.

Possible symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

This list does not include all possible symptoms. Symptoms may change with new COVID-19 variants and can vary depending on vaccination status. CDC will continue to update this list as they learn more about COVID-19.

Older adults and people who have underlying **medical conditions** like heart or lung disease or diabetes are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19.

Feeling Sick? If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, consider the following options: **Get tested for COVID-19.**

If you have already tested positive for COVID-19, refer to the CDC's **isolation guidance**. People with COVID-19 should isolate for **5 days** and if they are asymptomatic (no symptoms) or their symptoms are resolving (without fever for 24 hours), follow that by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others; to minimize the risk of infecting people you may encounter.

The CDC guideline change is motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of **SARS-CoV-2** transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after. Additionally, CDC is continuing to updating the recommended quarantine period for anyone in the general public who is [exposed to COVID-19](#).

For people who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the Johnson & Johnson vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days.

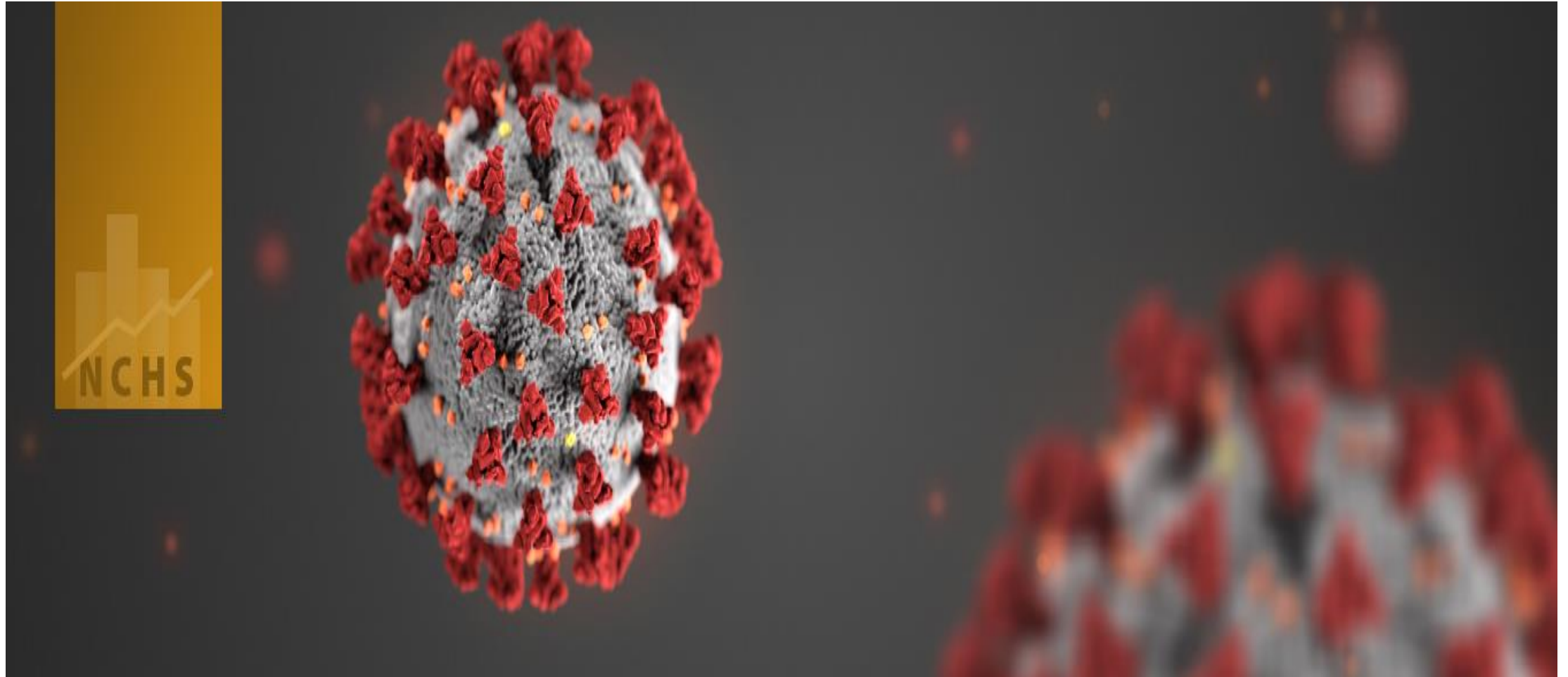
Alternatively, if a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person [wear a well-fitting mask](#) at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure.

For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure. If symptoms occur, individuals should immediately quarantine (isolate themselves) until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

Risk Increases With Age :The risk for severe illness with COVID-19 increases with age, with older adults at highest risk. Older adults are more likely to get very sick or die from COVID-19. Those who are unvaccinated or have a disability, weakened immune system, or certain medical conditions are also at greater risk of getting very sick from COVID-19.

- There are tools to protect you from getting very sick from COVID-19: [Stay up to date on your COVID-19 vaccines](#). Vaccines are effective at protecting people from severe illness and death from COVID-19.
- Older adults, especially those with other medical conditions, [wear the most protective mask](#) (N95) that fits well and that you will wear consistently to protect against COVID-19.
- Get treatment early if you have COVID-19. [Effective treatments](#) are now widely available for people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19, including older adults.

COVID-19 Data from the National Center for Health Statistics



Data from South Africa and the United Kingdom demonstrates that vaccine effectiveness against infection for two doses of an mRNA vaccine is approximately 35%.

A COVID-19 vaccine booster dose restores vaccine effectiveness against infection to 75%. COVID-19 vaccination decreases the risk of severe disease, hospitalization, and death from COVID-19. CDC strongly encourages COVID-19 vaccination for everyone 5 and older and boosters for everyone 16 and older.

Vaccination is the best way to protect yourself and reduce the impact of COVID-19 on our communities.

The following is attributable to CDC Director, Dr. Rochelle Walensky:

On September 12, 2023, **CDC recommended a COVID-19 vaccine updated for 2023-2024 for everyone aged 6 months and older to protect against serious illness.** The main reason to get vaccinated against COVID-19 is to protect yourself against severe illness, hospitalization, and even death. Sep 12, 2023

What You Need to Know

- If you have COVID-19 and are [more likely to get very sick](#) from COVID-19, [treatments are available](#) that can reduce your risk of hospitalization and death.
- **Don't delay:** Treatment must be started within 5-7 days after you first develop symptoms.
- **Other medications** can help reduce symptoms and help you manage your illness.
- The [Treatment Locator \(hhs.gov\)](#) can help you find a location that offers testing and treatment or a pharmacy where you can fill your prescription.
- Learn more about what to do [if you are sick](#).

When to Seek Emergency Medical Attention

Look for **emergency warning signs*** for COVID 19:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

If someone is showing any of these signs, call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility. Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.



The FDA has authorized or approved several antiviral medications used to treat mild to moderate COVID-19 in people who are more likely to get very sick.

Antiviral treatments target specific parts of the virus to stop it from multiplying in the body, helping to prevent severe illness and death.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) provides [COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines](#) for healthcare providers to help them work with their patients and determine the best treatment options for them. Remember that several options are available for treating COVID-19.

- Information Sources: [Division of Population Health](#), [National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease 2019 \(COVID-19\)](#) Last Updated: Jul 2023
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>
Find links to guidance and information on all topics related to COVID-19, including the COVID-19 vaccine, symptom self-check, data, and other topics.
- [COVID-19 Testing: What You Need to Know](#) Last Updated: Sep 2023
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>
Learn about testing for COVID-19, including the types of tests, who should get tested, how to get tested, and print resources in English and Spanish.
- [What is COVID-19 Reinfection?](#) Last Updated: Mar 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/reinfection.html>
- **The CDC recommends that people ages 6 months and older, including those with previous infections, stay up to date with COVID-19 vaccines. Regardless of your vaccination status or if you have had a previous infection:...**