If you have tested positive for COVID-19, OR if you develop symptoms, follow these instructions. These instructions are for people who have been told to isolate or who are voluntarily isolating due to symptoms.

- A person's residence is the preferred setting for isolation.

Isolation or self-isolation includes people who:

- Have a positive COVID-19 test.
- Have symptoms of COVID-19: cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html.
- Are getting ill and think they might have COVID-19. Symptoms, especially early on, may be mild and feel like a common cold. Early symptoms could include a combination of cough, body aches, fatigue, and chest tightness. Some people may not develop fever or fever may not appear until several days into the illness.

Isolation

- Separates sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.
- Is for people who are already sick.
- Can be voluntary, but public health agencies have legal authority to issue isolation orders to sick people.

How long does it last?

- Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, should isolate (stay home) for at least 5 days.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are improving and you do not have a fever you may leave your house after 5 days but should continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
- If you still have a fever or your symptoms haven't improved after 5 days you should be in isolation (stay away from others) until:

- o You have had no fever for at least 24 hours (without using medicine that reduces fevers)
AND
- o other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved)
CDC: What to do if you are sick: cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html
- If you had no symptoms when you tested positive but developed symptoms AFTER your test, you should continue to isolate for at least 5 days after your symptoms started and are improving as described above.
- Health care workers may have to isolate for longer and should do what they are told by the health care facility they work for. People with severe illness or who are immunocompromised may require a longer period of isolation.

What else should I do?

Stay home, except to get medical care.

- If you have a medical appointment, call ahead and let them know you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms, so the office can tell you what to do.
  - o Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
  - o Avoid using public transportation, rideshares, or taxis.

Monitor your symptoms.

People with mild illness may be able to isolate and recover at home without seeing a medical provider. If your symptoms worsen (e.g., difficulty breathing) or if you are at high risk of developing severe COVID-19, call a health care provider or nurse line to find out what to do and if outpatient treatments (covid19.colorado.gov/for-coloradans/covid-19-treatments) might be available for you. Some telehealth and nurse line options are available here: covid19.colorado.gov/telehealth-and-nurselines

Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home.

- As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from others in your home.
- Use a separate bathroom if available.
- Have another member of your household care for your pets. If you must care for your pet, wash your hands before and after contact with them.

Wear a face covering when you are around other people or pets, and before you enter a health care provider's office.

- If you are medically unable to tolerate a face covering, then people who live with you should not be in the same room with you, or they should wear a face covering if they enter your room.

Practice actions that protect others.

- Clean your hands often
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. When using hand sanitizer, cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Soap and water is preferred if hands are visibly dirty.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze, then throw the tissue away. If a tissue is not available, use your inner elbow or sleeve.
  - Immediately clean your hands (see above).
- Avoid sharing personal household items
  - Don't share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home.
  - After using these items, they should be washed thoroughly with soap and water.
- Clean surfaces every day
  - Clean "high-touch" surfaces like counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
  - Clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
  - Use a regular household cleaning spray or wipe. Follow the label directions for correct and safe use.

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the dispatcher you are isolating for COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before emergency medical services arrive.

Additional resources

- If you have been instructed to isolate or quarantine and have more questions, please contact your local public health agency.

- Handout: How to isolate when household space is limited

- Handout: Stay at home when you are sick

- For handouts in other languages