STAY SAFE MN

Quarantine Guidance for COVID-19

11/15/2021

This guidance is for people in Minnesota to understand how to follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for quarantine. Information can be found at Close Contacts and Quarantine: COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/close.html).

Quarantine – or separating oneself from others – is recommended for people who have been close to a person with COVID-19 (an exposure). Since people infected with COVID-19 may have no symptoms or can be contagious before symptoms start, quarantine is an important way to keep COVID-19 from spreading. To protect family, other close contacts, and the community, a person who is **not fully vaccinated** and has been exposed to a person with COVID-19 needs to stay home and away from others (quarantine); get tested immediately; and, if the test is negative, get tested again five to seven days after the last exposure.

People who are **fully vaccinated** (at least two weeks after completing a vaccination series, which is two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series) and have been exposed to a person with COVID-19 do not need to quarantine. However, they should get tested five to seven days after exposure, even if they do not have symptoms. They should also wear a mask indoors in public until they get a negative test result or for 14 days following exposure. **Anyone who develops symptoms of COVID-19 should separate from others and get tested immediately, whether or not they are vaccinated.**

Whether or not someone is fully vaccinated, if they have close contact with someone with COVID-19, they should watch for symptoms for 14 days, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell. Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19, whether or not they are vaccinated, should follow the recommendations at If You Are Sick: COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html).

People who live or work in a health care or long-term care facility and have a COVID-19 exposure, even if they have been vaccinated, should refer to COVID-19 Recommendations for Health Care Workers (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/hcwrecs.pdf).

Who needs to quarantine?

People with the following types of exposures need to quarantine if they were not fully vaccinated (less than two weeks after completing a vaccination series, which is two doses in a two-dose series or one dose in a one-dose series) before the exposure occurred:

- People who were within 6 feet of someone contagious with COVID-19 for a total of 15 minutes or more over the course of a day (24 hours).

- People who live in the same household as someone with COVID-19.

- People who had direct physical or intimate contact (e.g., kissing, hugging, other types of physical contact) with a person who has COVID-19.

- People who provide care for a person who has COVID-19 at home.

- People with direct exposure to respiratory droplets from a person contagious with COVID-19.

Sometimes quarantining after travel is also recommended. For more information, visit Protect Yourself and Others: Traveling (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html#travel).

Who does not need to quarantine?

If someone is vaccinated and is exposed, they do not need to quarantine if **BOTH** of the following are true:

- The COVID-19 exposure was at least 14 days after their vaccination series was fully completed.

- They do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

If someone has recovered from COVID-19 in the past 90 days and is exposed again, they do not need to quarantine if **ALL** of the following are true:

- Their illness was laboratory confirmed in the past 90 days.

- They have fully recovered.

- They do not currently have any symptoms of COVID-19.

People who live or work in a health care or long-term care facility and have a COVID-19 exposure, even if vaccinated, should refer to COVID-19 Recommendations for Health Care Workers (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/hcwrecs.pdf).

How to quarantine

- Those who need to quarantine should stay home for 14 days after the exposure ended. This is the best strategy to minimize the spread of COVID-19 to others.

  - Do not go to work, school, or any other place outside the home.

  - Do not invite guests from outside your household into your home.

  - In some specific situations, there may be options to shorten the quarantine period. Refer to **Options to reduce quarantine in specific situations** below.

- Separate from other people in your home and monitor for symptoms, such as fever, cough, shortness of breath, chills, headache, muscle pain, sore throat, or loss of taste or smell. Get tested if

you develop symptoms. Anyone with symptoms should refer to If You Are Sick: COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html) for isolation guidance.

- Stay away from people who are at high risk for getting very sick from COVID-19, including older adults, those living in long-term care facilities, and people with health conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, liver disease, severe obesity, and weakened immune systems.

- If you are not fully vaccinated, get tested for COVID-19 immediately and again five to seven days after the last exposure if the first test was negative, even if you do not have symptoms. If test results are positive, follow recommendations at Information for Confirmed Cases and Contacts (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/cases.html).

- When quarantining at home, you must make sure to:

  - Stay in a specific room and separate from others in the home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.

  - Wear a face mask if other people are around.

  - Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing.

  - Wash hands thoroughly and often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol.

  - Avoid touching your face with unwashed hands.

  - Avoid sharing personal household items, such as food, dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water.

  - Avoid using public transportation, ridesharing (such as Uber or Lyft), or taxis.

How long to quarantine

A 14-day quarantine period is recommended in any of the following situations:

- The person lives in the same household and is a contact of someone with COVID-19.

  - The 14-day quarantine period starts the day after the person with COVID-19 completes their isolation period (usually 10 days from the day their symptoms started, or if they did not have symptoms, 10 days from the day they got tested. Refer to If You Are Sick: How Long to Stay Home (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html#stayhome).

  - If multiple people in the home have COVID-19, the 14 days start after the last person has completed their isolation. This may mean that other household members will need to quarantine for 24 days or more.

- The person lives or works in a congregate living situation, including a long-term care facility, correctional facility, homeless shelter, or other setting where people cannot quarantine individually and where they can expose multiple people, including those at high risk of severe disease.

- The person works in a health care setting. Refer to COVID-19 Recommendations for Health Care Workers (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/hcp/hcwrecs.pdf).

Options to reduce quarantine in specific situations

A 14-day quarantine *remains* the CDC's recommendation for the greatest protection against spreading virus that causes COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2. Because people can develop COVID-19 up to 14 days after an exposure, any quarantine shorter than 14 days may lead to increased spread of the virus in the community.

In some situations, quarantine can negatively affect income, education, and other health conditions of exposed people. CDC has reviewed data and modeled options to reduce the length of quarantine to seven or 10 days in specific situations. These options balance the impact of quarantine on people and society with the potential for COVID-19 spread. Reducing quarantine and the impact on the person is also expected to increase compliance with recommended quarantine duration.

CDC has published additional detail on reduced quarantine, including estimates of the post-quarantine transmission risk, on their website: CDC Science Brief: Options to Reduce Quarantine for Contacts of Persons with SARS-CoV-2 Infection Using Symptom Monitoring and Diagnostic Testing (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/science/science-briefs/scientific-brief-options-to-reduce-quarantine.html).

Please note that shortened quarantine is not universally recommended. Some workplaces and settings may have different quarantine recommendations or requirements.

A shortened quarantine period may be considered if ALL of the following are true:

- The person has NOT had symptoms of COVID-19 during the quarantine period.

- The person does NOT live with someone who has COVID-19.

- The person does NOT live or work in a high-risk setting, including a long-term care or assisted living facility, correctional facility, shelter, or other congregate living facility.

- The person does NOT work in a health care facility.

- The person had a defined exposure, meaning a known exposure with a beginning and an end. Examples could be someone who was exposed:

  - At school or a sporting activity.

  - During a shift at work or while on break.

  - At a social gathering or event like a party or funeral.

If the above conditions are met, a person may consider two shortened quarantine options as long as they remain without symptoms:

- Ten-day quarantine without testing.

- Seven-day quarantine with a negative PCR test (not an antigen test or antibody/blood test), if the test occurred on day five after exposure or later.

Continue to watch for symptoms through day 14 after exposure, even if the quarantine was shortened. If any symptoms occur, separate from others right away and get tested. After stopping quarantine, it is still important to help slow the spread. Visit Protect Yourself & Others: COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/prevention.html) to learn more.

Determining date that quarantine ends

To determine when the quarantine period will end, identify the last date of exposure to someone with COVID-19. This is considered day zero. The next day is the first full day of quarantine, or day one. People are able to resume normal activities the day after their quarantine period is completed.

- A 14-day quarantine means the person can resume activities on day 15.

- A 10-day quarantine means the person can resume activities on day 11.

- A seven-day quarantine means the person can resume activities on day eight.

Additional resources

For people who have or develop symptoms: If You Are Sick: COVID-19 (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/sick.html)

To find testing: COVID-19 Testing (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/testsites/index.html)

For information on well-fitting masks: CDC: Improve How Your Mask Protects You (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/effective-masks.html)

For more information on COVID-19 from the Minnesota Department of Health: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) (www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/coronavirus/index.html)

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