When to Take an At-Home COVID-19 Test

At-home COVID-19 testing is one of our best tools to prevent the spread of the virus—alongside getting vaccinated and boosted. COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective at preventing infection, hospitalization, and serious illness, but no vaccine prevents 100% of infections. As the virus continues to evolve and cases are projected to spike seasonally, at-home testing helps you to determine if you have COVID-19 so you can prevent spreading it to others. Here are key scenarios and considerations to help you determine when you should take an at-home COVID-19 test and what to do when you get your results.

You have symptoms of COVID-19.

Refer to the <u>CDC site</u> for more information on COVID-19 symptoms.

You had close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

Wear a high-quality mask after you find out you've been exposed, and get tested 5 days after exposure. You will be with someone who is immunocompromised or at high risk for severe COVID-19.

Wear a high-quality mask as an additional precaution.

You plan to attend an event or gathering.

Consider testing right before you go to an indoor gathering as a precautionary measure.



Take an At-Home Covid-19 Test



If your at-home COVID-19 test is *positive*:

You should stay home and isolate away from others for at least 5 days after testing positive.

When to end isolation:

- After **5 days** if you have been fever-free for 24 hours and you had *mild or asymptomatic* COVID-19.
- After **10 days** if you had *moderate or severe illness* and/or you are *immunocompromised*. Consult your healthcare provider for further guidance.
- If you ended isolation but your COVID-19 symptoms **recur or worsen**, you should restart your isolation from **day 0** and consider re-testing.
- Consider taking an at-home COVID-19 test to ensure you're **no longer infected.**

Continued precautions:

 After you have ended isolation and no longer experience symptoms, wear a high-quality mask through day 10 when around others.

Treatment and care:

- If you experience severe symptoms, such as difficulty breathing or chest pain, seek medical care immediately.
- If you are at **high risk** for severe COVID-19, consult your health care provider *right away* to discuss whether you need antiviral medication.

If your at-home COVID-19 test is *negative*:

Re-test 24–48 hours after your first test, especially if you are continuing to experience symptoms. *A negative test doesn't rule out infection.*

Continued precautions:

- **If you were exposed** to COVID-19, take precautions to protect yourself and others (i.e. retesting, wearing a high-quality mask) for 10 days after exposure, even if you test negative. Follow the <u>CDC guidelines on COVID-19 exposure</u>.
- Knowing your <u>COVID-19 Community Level</u> can help you decide if you should take additional precautions, especially if you tested as a precaution before attending a gathering or spending time with someone at high risk.

Treatment and care:

• If you continue to receive negative test results but symptoms persist, contact your healthcare provider.

Recommendations are from the CDC and current as of February 2023. For the latest COVID-19 information and testing guidelines, visit <u>CDC.gov/coronavirus</u>.

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