



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Bureau of Infectious Disease and Laboratory Sciences
305 South Street, Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

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**Information and Guidance for
Persons in Isolation due to COVID-19**

You are required to isolate (separate yourself) from other people because you have been diagnosed as a confirmed case of infection with 2019 Novel (new) Coronavirus (COVID-19) or because you had a high-risk exposure to COVID-19 and now have symptoms.

COVID-19 is caused by a virus. It is spread through respiratory secretions (mucous and droplets from coughs and sneezes) from an infected person and can cause serious illness such as pneumonia (lung infection), and in some rare cases, death.

You must remain in isolation until a public health authority (the Massachusetts Department of Public Health or your local Board of Health) tells you can leave your home. A public health authority will confirm that you may leave your home once the risk of infecting others is determined to be low. For most patients, this period of required isolation will last approximately 10 days, but may be longer if your symptoms persist.

During the isolation period, you may not have visitors in the location where you are isolating. If you must share living quarters with another person, then that person will be subject to quarantine. If someone in your home is a young child, pregnant, immunocompromised, or has a chronic heart, liver, lung, or kidney condition, or is over 65 years of age, that person is at particular risk if they have contact with you during isolation. If anyone you have contact with fits this description, please discuss this with your local board of health or the Massachusetts Department of public health so that steps may be taken to protect these individuals.

Your local Board of Health and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health will work with you to identify anybody, including household members, who are considered to have been exposed and will make required quarantine recommendations.

This information sheet provides you with information about what *to do* and *not to do* while you are in isolation. If you have questions after reading this, you can call your local Board of Health, or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health which is available 24/7 at 617-983-6800.

While you are in isolation you should follow these instructions:

1. Do not leave your home except for urgent medical care. If you must leave your home for urgent medical care, wear a mask, such as a cloth or surgical mask. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less. Call the healthcare provider before you go and tell them that you have COVID-19 infection. For the protection of others, you should use a personal car or call an ambulance to travel to your healthcare provider. **Do not take public transportation, ride shares (e.g. Uber or Lyft), or taxis under any circumstance.**
2. Wear a mask, such as a cloth or surgical mask, if you must be in contact with another person. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.
3. Do not have visitors in your home.
4. If possible, other people should not be living in your home while you are in isolation there.
5. Do not share a bedroom or bathroom with anyone else.
6. Do not share towels or bed sheets/blankets with other people.
7. Wash your laundry separately from the laundry of other people.
8. Do not share eating or drinking utensils with other people. Wash utensils normally in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
9. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing and throw tissues away in a lined waste container. Then wash your hands.
10. Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Anyone you have to come in contact with in your household should:

1. Remain aware of their health and watch themselves for:
 - a. A fever (temperature over 100.3 degrees). They should take their temperature in the morning and at night.
 - b. Other symptoms such as a cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, chills, stiff or sore muscles, headache, or diarrhea.
2. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available they should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
3. Wear a mask, such as a cloth or surgical mask, when they are in close contact with you. If not available try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less. They should be careful to only touch the parts of the mask that go around the ears or behind the head. Do not touch the front of the mask. They should wash their hands immediately with soap and water after taking the mask off.
4. Wear disposable gloves if they need to have direct contact with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) or handle your dirty laundry. Remove the gloves carefully without touching the outside of the gloves, throw the gloves away, and wash their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

If anyone in your household develops any of these symptoms, contact the local health department or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at the phone numbers below.

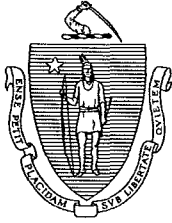
If they need to seek medical care, they should call their healthcare provider before they go and tell them they may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Other advice to keep your germs from spreading:

1. Your gloves, tissues, masks, and other trash should be put in a bag, tied closed, and put with other household trash.
2. Your laundry may be done in a standard washing machine using warm water and detergent. Bleach may be used but is not needed. Do not shake out the dirty laundry and avoid having the dirty laundry touch anyone's skin or clothing.
3. Surfaces in the home that you touch or that become dirty with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) should be cleaned and disinfected with a household disinfectant according to the directions on the label. Wear gloves when cleaning.
4. Your bathroom should be cleaned every day using a household disinfectant according to the directions on the label. Wear gloves when cleaning.

How long should you follow these instructions?

You will need to remain isolated for as long as it is possible for you to spread the infection to others. A public health authority (MDPH or your local board of health) will be in contact with you and will tell you when you can stop isolating yourself. For most patients, the required isolation period is 10 days, but may be longer if your symptoms persist, if you develop severe illness requiring hospitalization or are immune compromised.



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Acting Commissioner

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You are required to quarantine (separate yourself) from other people because you have been exposed to the 2019 Novel (New) Coronavirus (SARS-CoV2) the virus that causes COVID-19. If you have COVID-19, you could spread it to people around you and make them sick. Please note that individuals who had COVID-19 in the last 90 days (from day of symptom onset or day of first positive test if asymptomatic), AND individuals who have received either two doses of the Moderna or Pfizer COVID-19 vaccines or a single dose of the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine, at least 14 days ago, are not required to quarantine following an exposure.

Even if you are not required to quarantine because you are fully vaccinated or because you have had COVID-19 in the last 90 days, you should still monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days following an exposure. If you experience symptoms, separate yourself from others, seek testing, and contact your healthcare provider.

The virus is spread through respiratory secretions (mucous and droplets from coughing, sneezing and breathing) from an infected person. Many people can have the virus without ever showing any symptoms, however, it can cause serious illness such as pneumonia (lung infection), and in some rare cases, death. If you are infected, it is possible to spread the virus to others even if you don't have any symptoms.

This information sheet provides you with information about what *to do* and *not to do* while you are in quarantine. If you have questions after reading this, you can call your local Board of Health, or the Massachusetts Department of Public Health which is available 24/7 at 617-983-6800.

During your quarantine period, you must not have visitors in your home. The other people who live in your home can continue to do their normal activities as long as they are not in contact with you, as described further below, and have not been identified as a close contact and put into quarantine. If you test positive for COVID-19 and someone has come into contact with you, that person will likely need to be quarantined.

¹ Based on observational and published data, and recent modeling work conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, if shortened quarantine periods result in increased compliance with contact tracing and adherence to quarantine recommendations, the small risk that someone may develop COVID-19 after a shortened strict quarantine period is outweighed by the expected benefit of reduced transmission from the increased cooperation.

How long must you Quarantine?

The possible incubation period for COVID-19 is still 14 days although the majority of cases have incubation periods of fewer than 10 days¹. You will need to remain quarantined consistent with one of the quarantine options below:

OPTIONS	CRITERIA	ACTIVE MONITORING	RESIDUAL RISK
7 days of strict quarantine	<u>Release on Day 8 IF:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A test (either PCR or Abbott BinaxNOW antigen) taken on Day 5 or later is negative; AND • The individual has not experienced any symptoms up to that point; AND • The individual conducts active monitoring through Day 14 	Individual must actively monitor symptoms and take temperature once daily. IF even mild symptoms develop or the individual has a temperature of 100.0 F, they must immediately self-isolate, contact the public health authority overseeing their quarantine and get tested.	Approximately 5% residual risk of disease development
10 days of strict quarantine	<u>Release on Day 11 IF:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual has not experienced any symptoms up to that point; AND • The individual conducts active monitoring through Day 14. • No test is necessary under this option 		Approximately 1% residual risk of disease development
14 days of strict quarantine	<u>Release on Day 15 IF:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual has experienced ANY symptoms during the quarantine period EVEN if they have a negative COVID-19 test; OR • The individual indicates they are unwilling or unable to conduct active monitoring. 	No additional active monitoring required	Maximal risk reduction

While you are in quarantine you should follow these instructions:

1. Do not leave your home except for urgent medical care. If you must leave your home for urgent medical care, wear a mask, such as a cloth mask, or a surgical mask if one is available. Call the healthcare provider before you go and tell them that you are quarantined due to COVID-19 exposure. For the protection of others, you should **not take public transportation, ride shares (e.g. Uber or Lyft), or taxis to get to your healthcare provider.**
2. Wear a mask, such as a cloth mask, or a surgical mask if one is available, if you must be in contact with other people. Maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this

- is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.
3. Do not have any visitors in your home.
 4. Maintain six feet of distance from other people in your home. If absolutely necessary, have one person help you and do not have contact with other people in your home. Wear a mask, such as a cloth mask, or a surgical mask if one is available, when in the same room as that person. In addition, try to maintain a distance of six feet from others; when this is not possible, limit your time being closer to people to five minutes or less.
 5. If at all possible, use a separate bedroom and bathroom. Do not share towels or bed sheets/blankets with other people in your home. If you have to use a bathroom that other people use, make sure to wipe down all touched surfaces with a disinfectant after every use.
 6. Do not share eating or drinking utensils. Wash utensils normally in a dishwasher or by hand with warm water and soap.
 7. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and throw tissues away in a lined waste container. Then wash your hands.
 8. Wash your hands frequently using soap and water for at least 20 seconds each time you wash. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.

Anyone you have to come in contact with (including anyone in your home) should:

1. Wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds often. If soap and water are not available, they should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
2. Wear a mask, such as a cloth mask, or a surgical mask if one is available. They should be careful to only touch the parts of the mask that go around the ears or behind the head. Do not touch the front of the mask. They should wash their hands immediately after taking the mask off. In addition, they should try to maintain a distance of six feet from you; when this is not possible, limit their time being closer to you to five minutes or less.
3. Wear disposable gloves if they have to have direct contact with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) or handle your dirty laundry. Remove the gloves carefully without touching the outside of the gloves, throw the gloves away, and wash their hands with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand rub.

Anyone you have to come in contact with (including anyone in your home) should remain aware of their health and watch themselves for:

- a fever (temperature over 100.0 degrees). They should take their temperature in the morning and at night.
- other symptoms such as a cough, difficulty breathing, shortness of breath, chills, muscle or body aches, fatigue, sore throat, headache, congestion or runny nose, new onset loss of taste or smell, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea.

If anyone you came into contact with has any of these symptoms, they should go get tested and then stay home while they wait for results. If they need to seek medical care, they should call their healthcare provider before they go and tell them that they may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Other advice to keep your germs from spreading:

1. Your disposable gloves, tissues, masks and other trash should be put in a bag, tied closed, and put with other household trash.
2. Your laundry may be done in a standard washing machine using warm water and detergent. Bleach may be used but is not needed. Do not shake out the dirty laundry.
3. Surfaces in the home that you touch or that become dirty with your body fluids (saliva/spit, mucous, urine, feces, vomit) should be cleaned and disinfected with a household disinfectant according to the label directions. Wear gloves while cleaning.
4. Your bathroom should be cleaned every day using a household disinfectant according to the directions on the label. Wear gloves while cleaning.