

COVID-19: Isolation Instructions for People with COVID-19

To view this document in different languages or in web format visit ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation

For the latest version of this guidance, please check: ph.lacounty.gov/covidisolation

SUMMARY

In Los Angeles County, if you have COVID-19* you are required to:

- 1 **Isolate yourself**, and
- 2 **Tell your [close contacts](#) that they have been exposed** and need to follow [instructions for close contacts](#) (if you have a positive viral test), and
- 3 **Follow the [Health Officer Isolation Order](#)** along with **the steps below**

*You are considered to have COVID-19, if you have a positive viral test for COVID-19 and/or a healthcare provider thinks that you have COVID-19.

Note: If you recently had COVID-19 (within the past 90 days) and you now have a new positive viral test for COVID-19 but you don't have symptoms¹, talk with your doctor to see if you have COVID-19 again.

Please help slow the spread of COVID-19 by answering if you get a call from "LA PublicHealth" or **1-833-641-0305** (see [Contact Tracing](#)). If you received a Los Angeles County Health Officer Order and have not yet had a contact tracing interview, you must call the number on the Order within 24 hours.



ISOLATE: Stay home

You must stay home and separate yourself from others until your home isolation ends.

- [Stay away](#) from household members.
- Do not go to work, school, or public areas.
- If you must leave home to get essential medical care, drive yourself, if possible. If you cannot drive yourself, sit in the back seat, leave the windows down, and wear a mask.
- If someone from outside your household is shopping for you, ask them to leave the food and other supplies at your door, if possible. Pick them up after the person has left. If you need help finding free delivery services, social services, essential items like food and medicines call 2-1-1 or visit the Public Health resource webpage ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/resources.htm.

¹ Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after being exposed to the virus and may include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, fatigue, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, and diarrhea. *This list does not include all possible symptoms of COVID-19. Some people with COVID-19 never get symptoms. Visit ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare to learn more about what to do if you are sick.*

- If you are experiencing homelessness or you are unable to safely isolate or quarantine at home, call the COVID Info line 833-540-0473, open daily 8:00am–8:30pm.

Work and school

- If you work or study in a setting where you could have gotten COVID-19 or passed it on to others, please tell your workplace or school so that they can advise others to test and/or quarantine as needed.
- Information about Disability Insurance, Unemployment & Paid Family Leave for people who are unable to work because they, or a family member, need to isolate or quarantine is available on the [California Employment Development Department](#) website.
- For more information on COVID-19 related work issues, view the [COVID-19 Safety Workers Rights in California Pamphlet](#).
- You do not need to have a negative test or a letter from Public Health to return to work or school.

When Does My Home Isolation End?

If you had symptoms and tested positive for COVID-19 or if your doctor thinks* that you have COVID-19, you must stay home until:

- At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first started **and**
- You do not have a fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers) **and**
- Your symptoms improve

If you test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms:

- You must stay home for 10 days after the test was taken, **but**
- If you develop symptoms, you need to follow the instructions above

*If your doctor initially thought your symptoms were due to COVID-19 (and you did not test positive for COVID-19) but they reassessed your diagnosis and decided that you are not infected, you can stop isolating after 24 hours of being fever-free. But, if you are a close contact to a person with COVID-19 you must follow the instructions in the "[If you develop symptoms](#)" section of the [Quarantine and Other Instructions for Close Contacts](#) webpage.

Note: If you have a [condition](#) that severely weakens your immune system you might need to stay home for longer than 10 days. Talk to your doctor for more information.

What to do when home isolation ends

- You can go back to your usual activities when your [home isolation ends](#) (see box above) including returning to work and/or school.
- Continue to practice physical distancing (stay 6 feet away from others) and to wear a mask when you are in public settings where other people are present.



TELL YOUR CLOSE CONTACTS: they have been exposed

If you have a positive viral test result for COVID-19 you must tell your close contacts that they could be infected. They are required to quarantine unless they are exempt. Give them the [Quarantine and Other Instructions for Close Contacts](#). They are available in multiple languages at ph.lacounty.gov/covidquarantine. Your close contacts must follow the instructions even if they feel well or are fully vaccinated.

Definition of a Close Contact

A "close contact" is any of the following people who were exposed to you while you were infectious*:

- a. Any person who was within 6 feet of you for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period
- b. Any person who had unprotected contact with your body fluids and/or secretions. For example, you coughed or sneezed on them, you shared utensils, a cup, or saliva with them, or they cared for you without wearing appropriate protective equipment.

*You are considered to be infectious (meaning you can spread COVID-19 to others) starting 2 days before your symptoms began until your isolation ends. If you test positive for COVID-19 but do not have any symptoms, you are considered to be infectious from 2 days before your test was taken until 10 days after your test.



TAKE CARE OF YOUR HEALTH

Home Care

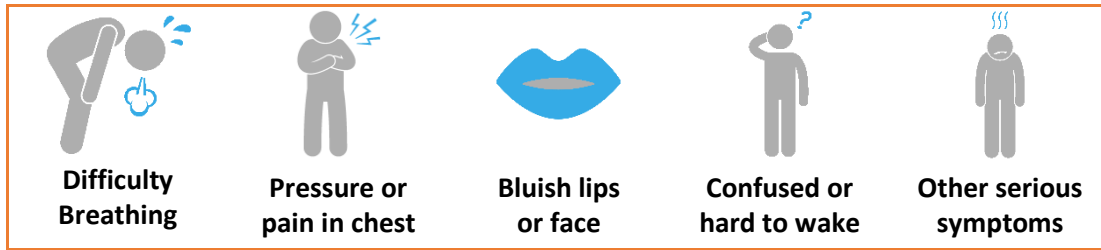
Most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home. Here are steps that you can take to help you get better:

- Rest and drink plenty of fluids
- Take over-the-counter medicine such as acetaminophen (Tylenol®) to reduce fever and pain. Note that children younger than age 2 should not be given any over-the-counter cold medications without first speaking with a doctor.

Seeking Medical Care

Stay in touch with your doctor and seek medical care if your symptoms get worse. If you are age 65 years or older or have an [underlying medical condition](#) it is especially important to call your doctor as you may be at a higher risk of serious illness.

Call 911 if there are emergency warning signs



People with emergency warning signs should call 911. If it's not urgent, call your doctor before visiting. You may be able to get advice by phone.

Dealing with Stress

COVID-19 and self-isolation are stressful for people. Visit the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's [COVID-19 webpage](#) and the 211LA webpage (211la.org/resources/subcategory/mental-health) for local resources to address mental health & wellbeing needs and concerns. In addition, guidance and resources, including information on crisis hotlines, are also available on the CDC webpage [Coping with Stress](#).

LA County residents have free access to iPrevail.com, an online mental health resource to help with life's everyday stressors. After a short assessment, you are connected to customized support to meet your needs. Options include:

- on-demand chat with trained Peer Coaches,
- self-paced lessons on a variety of topics to improve wellbeing, and
- community support groups.

iPrevail is offered in English and Spanish and is available 24/7 from any smart device.

If you need to speak with someone about your mental health, contact your doctor or the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Access Center 24/7 Helpline at 1-800-854-7771. If you need help finding healthcare, call the Los Angeles County Information line at 2-1-1. This number is available 24/7.



PROTECT OTHERS

Follow the steps below to help prevent the disease from spreading to others in your home and your community.

Separate yourself from others in your home

- If you need to be in the same room as other people, set it up so that you can stay 6 feet apart if possible. It is important to stay away from people who are at [higher risk of serious illness](#).
- Use a separate bathroom. If this is not possible, disinfect the bathroom after use (see cleaning information [below](#)).

- Open windows or use a fan or an air conditioner in shared spaces in the home.
- Do not allow non-essential visitors.
- Do not handle pets or other animals.

Anyone who continues to be in close contact with you will need to stay in quarantine for longer (see [Quarantine and Other Instructions for Close Contacts](#)).

Wear a mask when you are around others

- Wear a well-fitting mask over your nose and mouth when you must be around other people in your own home. This includes people who are fully vaccinated or have recently recovered from COVID-19. If possible, wear a mask with at least 3 layers, such as a surgical mask.
- If you are not able to wear a mask, then people who live with you should avoid being in the same room with you if possible. If they must enter the room you are in, they should wear a mask to protect themselves. If possible, they should wear a respirator (N95) or wear a [double mask](#) (a cloth mask over a surgical mask). After leaving the room, they should immediately clean their hands, then [remove](#) the mask, and clean their hands again.
- *Use masks with caution with children.* Infants and children under the age of 2 should not wear masks. Most children between the ages of 2 and 8 can safely wear a mask but must be supervised by an adult. A mask should not be placed on anyone who is unable to remove the mask without help. See [Who should not wear a mask](#) for more information.
- See [Masks](#) for more information.

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw used tissues in a lined trash can after each use. Wash your hands or use hand sanitizer after you cough or sneeze.

Avoid sharing food or personal household items

- Do not prepare or serve food to others, if possible.
- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people or pets in your home.
- Make sure to wash your dishes, drinking glasses, and eating utensils with soap and water after each use.

Clean your hands often

- Wash your hands often, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; before eating or preparing food; and after touching your face mask or cover. Use soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub hands together for 30 seconds until they feel dry. Use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.

Clean and disinfect all “high-touch” surfaces every day

- Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces e.g. counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
- Clean and disinfect any surfaces that may have body fluids on them.

- Use household cleaning and disinfectant sprays or wipes. Be sure to follow the product label instructions.
- If caregivers and household contacts clean or come into contact with your body fluids or secretions (such as sweat, saliva, sputum, nasal mucus, vomit, urine, or diarrhea) they should wear a disposable facemask and gloves. After cleaning, they should remove and dispose of their gloves first, clean their hands, then remove and dispose of their facemask, and clean their hands again.

See cleaning instructions in [Preventing the spread of respiratory illness in the home](#).



TALK TO PUBLIC HEALTH - Contact Tracing

Contact tracing is a simple, confidential process that is being used to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

- If you received a Los Angeles County Health Officer Isolation Order and have not already completed a contact tracing interview, you must call the number on the Order within 24 hours. If you get a call or message from "LA PublicHealth" or 1-833-641-0305, please do your part by taking the call and answering some questions about the places you have been and the people you have been around while you were infectious.
- The people you tell the specialist about will be contacted and asked to stay home to help prevent others from getting sick. They will not be told your name or contact information. The specialist will also answer any questions you may have and share information about services.
- To learn more about contact tracing, click [here](#).



MORE INFORMATION

- For more information on COVID-19 and to view the resources mentioned above in multiple languages, visit ph.lacounty.gov/media/coronavirus/.
- For help finding free delivery services, social services, essential items like food and medicines, visit ph.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/resources.htm or call 2-1-1 (which is available 24/7).
- Please call your health care provider for any questions related to your health. If you need help finding a health care provider, call 2-1-1.