

# Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)

## Los Angeles County Department of Public Health Guidance Based on Test Results

### Recent Updates:

11/8/20: Updated information on spread of COVID-19 and recommendations for isolation and quarantine.

### 1. How are Coronaviruses spread?

Like other respiratory illnesses human coronaviruses most commonly spread to others from an infected person through:

- Droplets produced through coughing, sneezing or talking.
- Close personal contact, such as caring for an infected person.

COVID-19 may also spread by touching a surface or object that has the virus on it and then touching the mouth, nose, or eyes but this is not thought to be the main way the virus spreads. Some people get COVID-19 without ever showing symptoms but they can still spread the infection to others.

### 2. What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Reported illnesses have ranged from people with mild or no symptoms to people becoming severely ill, requiring admission to the hospital, and dying.

Symptoms may include the following: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting. This list of symptoms is not all inclusive.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 talk to a healthcare provider and get a test for COVID-19. You should stay home and protect others until you get the result of your COVID-19 test or until your provider tells you that you don't have COVID-19.

If you test positive for COVID-19 or your healthcare provider tells you that you are likely to have COVID-19, you should [self-isolate](#) at home.

### 3. I did not have symptoms but was tested for COVID-19 anyways, is there anything that I should be doing while I wait for my test results.

If you get tested even though you don't have symptoms, you should continue to follow recommended physical (social) distancing practices, such as staying home and staying at least 6 feet away from others when you are outside your home until your test results are back. You should also use a cloth face covering whenever you leave the home and are around others that are not part of your household. If you were a contact to a positive case of COVID-19 you should remain in [quarantine](#) at your home and away from others until your results are back and then follow the guidance below based on what those results show.

#### • If my test is negative is there anything I should do?

When leaving your home, follow recommended physical distancing practices by staying at least 6 feet

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away from others and using a cloth face covering when you are in contact with others outside your home. It is important to note that a negative test result may just mean that you were not infected at the time the test was done but you could still become infected at a later point so it is important to continue to practice prevention measures such as physical distancing and washing your hands frequently.

It is important to note that if you were a [contact](#) to a positive case when you were tested you should remain in [quarantine](#) for the full 14 days even if your test comes back negative. This is because the incubation period for the virus can be up to 14 days and unless you were tested on the 14<sup>th</sup> day from your exposure, a negative test earlier in the quarantine period does not mean you are not infected.

- **If my test is positive is there anything I should do?**

Even though you don't have symptoms if your test comes back positive you should stay home and away from the public for at least 10 days from when you were tested. This is because you could spread the infection to others even if you don't have symptoms.

If you were a [contact](#) to a positive case when you were tested you can end isolation as soon as you have completed 10 days from the date of your test even if this is before your [quarantine](#) period is over, as long as you remain symptom-free.

- **I did not have symptoms when I tested positive for COVID-19, but I developed symptoms during my isolation period. Do I have to stay in isolation for longer?**

The clock resets if you develop symptoms during your isolation period. If you develop symptoms you have to stay isolated at home for at least 1 day after your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications, AND there is improvement in your respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath), AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared.

If you were a [contact](#) to a positive case and were in [quarantine](#) when your symptoms developed you must follow the isolation instructions for people with symptoms.

#### **4. I have symptoms and just got tested for COVID-19 is there anything I should do while waiting for my test results?**

You should stay home and protect others until the test results are back. See the *Learn About Symptoms & What To Do If You Are Sick* guidance at [ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare](http://ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare) for more information.

- **If my results are negative is there anything I should be doing?**

If you are symptomatic but have a negative molecular test result for COVID-19, we recommend that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications and there is improvement in your symptoms. (See the public health [testing webpage](#) for more information on molecular tests.)

It is important to note that if you were a [contact](#) to a positive case when you got tested you must

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remain in quarantine for the full 14 days even if your test results were negative.

- **If my result is positive what should I be doing?**

You should stay isolated until at least 1 day (24 hours) after your fever has resolved without the use of fever-reducing medications and there is improvement in your symptoms, AND at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared. Follow instructions for [home isolation](#) found on the public health website.

Be sure to tell all your [close contacts](#) they need to be in quarantine for 14 days after their last contact with you. Refer to the [health officer order for home quarantine](#).

### **5. Do I still have to stay 6 feet away from others and wear a cloth face covering even after I come out of quarantine or isolation?**

Since we are still learning more about the novel coronavirus and how long people can remain infectious, all individuals are required to stay 6 feet apart from others and wear a cloth face covering in public regardless of what their test results were or whether they have already been in isolation or quarantine.