Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Quarantine If You Might Be Sick

Stay home if you might have been exposed to COVID-19

Updated July 16, 2020

Print

Quarantine is used to keep someone *who might have been exposed to COVID-19* away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Who needs to quarantine?	Anyone who has been in **close contact with someone who has COVID-19.**
	This includes people who previously had COVID-19 and people who have taken a serologic (antibody) test and have antibodies to the virus.
	What counts as close contact?
	- You were within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes - You provided care at home to someone who is sick with COVID-19 - You had direct physical contact with the person (touched, hugged, or kissed them) - You shared eating or drinking utensils - They sneezed, coughed, or somehow got respiratory droplets on you

Steps to take	**Stay home and monitor your health**
	- Stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19
	- Watch for fever (100.4◦F), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19
	- If possible, stay away others, especially people who are at higher risk for getting very sick from COVID-19

When to start and end quarantine

You should stay home for 14 days after your last contact with a person who has COVID-19.

For all of the following scenarios, even if you test negative for COVID-19 or feel healthy, you should stay home (quarantine) since symptoms may appear 2 to 14 days after exposure to the virus.
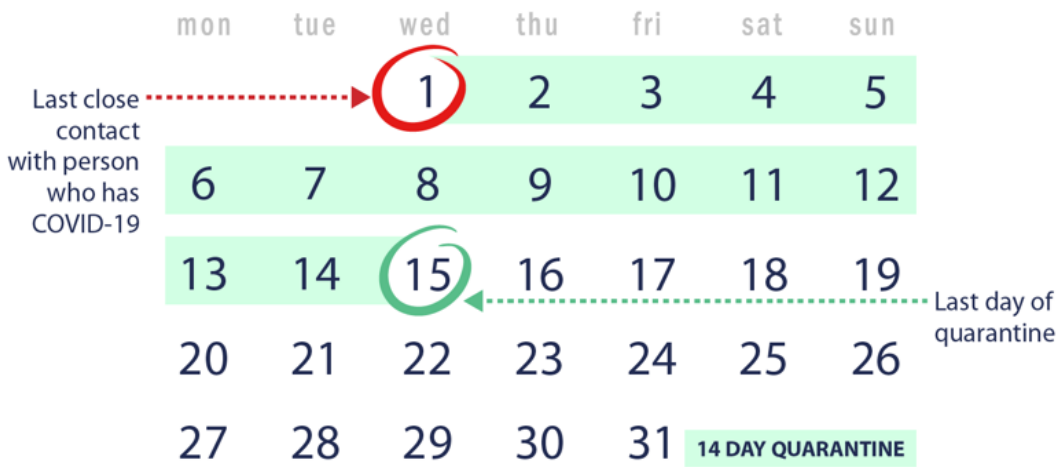
See scenarios below to determine when you can end quarantine and be around others.

Scenario 1: Close contact with someone who has COVID–19—will not have further close contact

I had close contact with someone who has COVID-19 and will not have further contact or interactions with the person while they are sick (e.g., co-worker, neighbor, or friend).

Your last day of quarantine is 14 days from the date you had close contact.

Date of last close contact with person who has COVID-19 + 14 days= end of quarantine

	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat	sun
Last close contact with person who has COVID-19 →			1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19 → Last day of quarantine
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31	14 DAY QUARANTINE	

Please note if your quarantine starts at noon on day 1, then it would end at noon on the last day.

Scenario 2: Close contact with someone who has COVID-19—live with the person but can avoid further close contact

I live with someone who has COVID-19 (e.g., roommate, partner, family member), and that person has isolated by staying in a separate bedroom. I have had no close contact with the person since they isolated.

Your last day of quarantine is 14 days from when the person with COVID-19 began home isolation.

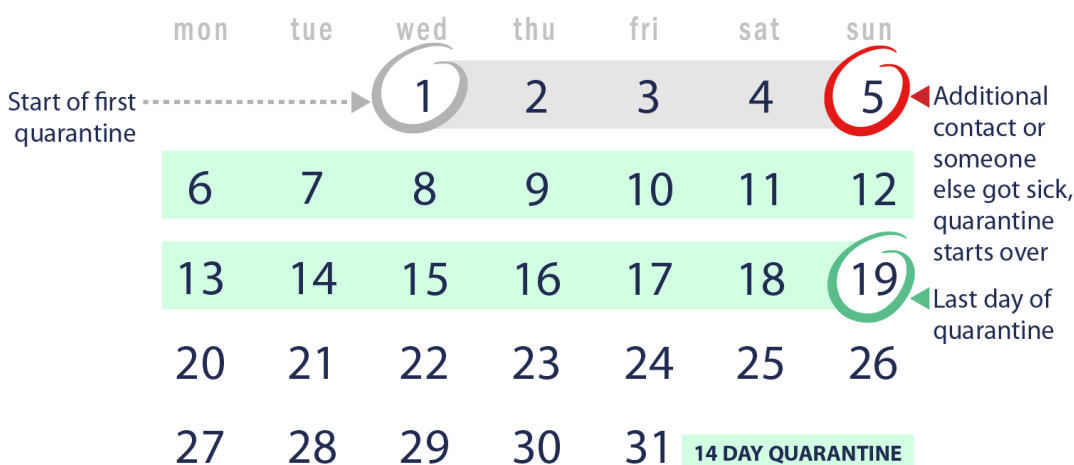Date person with COVID-19 began home isolation + 14 days = end of quarantine

	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat	sun
Person with COVID-19 starts home isolation →			1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19 → Last day of quarantine
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31	14 DAY QUARANTINE	

Please note if your quarantine starts at noon on day 1, then it would end at noon on the last day.

Scenario 3. Under quarantine and had additional close contact with someone who has COVID-19

I live with someone who has COVID-19 and started my 14-day quarantine period because we had close contact. What if I ended up having close contact with the person who is sick during my quarantine? What if another household member gets sick with COVID-19? Do I need to restart my quarantine?

Yes. You will have to restart your quarantine from the last day you had close contact with anyone in your house who has COVID-19. **Any time a new household member gets sick with COVID-19 and you had close contact, you will need to restart your quarantine.**

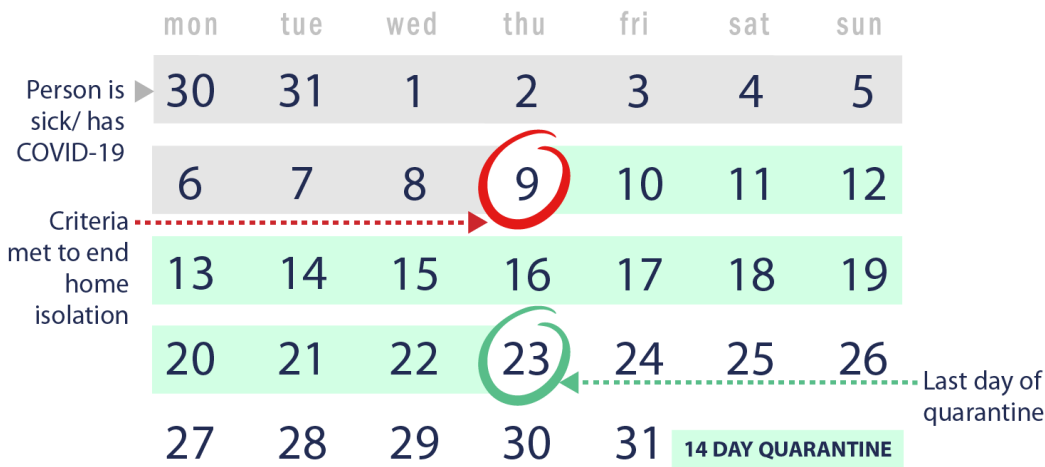Date of additional close contact with person who has COVID-19 + 14 days = end of quarantine

	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat	sun
Start of first quarantine	1	2	3	4	5 ◄ Additional contact or someone else got sick, quarantine starts over
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19 ◄ Last day of quarantine
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30	31	**14 DAY QUARANTINE**

Please note if your quarantine starts at noon on day 1, then it would end at noon on the last day.

Scenario 4: Live with someone who has COVID-19 and cannot avoid continued close contact

I live in a household where I cannot avoid close contact with the person who has COVID-19. I am providing direct care to the person who is sick, don't have a separate bedroom to isolate the person who is sick, or live in close quarters where I am unable to keep a physical distance of 6 feet.

You should avoid contact with others outside the home while the person is sick, and quarantine for 14 days after the person who has COVID-19 meets the criteria to end home isolation.

Date the person with COVID-19 ends home isolation + 14 days = end of quarantine

	mon	tue	wed	thu	fri	sat	sun
Person is sick/ has COVID-19 ▶	30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	6	7	8	**9**	10	11	12
Criteria met to end home isolation	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	**23**	24	25	26 → **Last day of quarantine**
	27	28	29	30	31	**14 DAY QUARANTINE**	

Please note if your quarantine starts at noon on day 1, then it would end at noon on the last day.

Last Updated July 16, 2020

Content source: National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases

CDC Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

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When You Can be Around Others After You Had or Likely Had COVID-19

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If you have or think you might have COVID-19, it is important to stay home and away from other people. Staying away from others helps stop the spread of COVID-19. **If you have an emergency warning sign (including trouble breathing),** get emergency medical care immediately.

When you can be around others (end home isolation) depends on different factors for different situations.

Find CDC's recommendations for your situation below.

I think or know I had COVID-19, and I had symptoms

You can be with others after

- At least 10 days since symptoms first appeared **and**
- At least 24 hours with no fever without fever-reducing medication **and**
- Symptoms have improved

Depending on your healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, you might get tested to see if you still have COVID-19. If you are tested, you can be around others when you have no fever, respiratory symptoms have improved, and you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

I tested positive for COVID-19 but had no symptoms

If you continue to have no symptoms, you can be with others after:

- 10 days have passed since test

Depending on your healthcare provider's advice and availability of testing, you might get tested to see if you still have COVID-19. If you will be tested, you can be around others after you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

If you develop symptoms after testing positive, follow the guidance above for "I think or know I had COVID, and I had symptoms."

I have a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) due to a health condition or medication. When can I be around others?

People with conditions that weaken their immune system might need to stay home longer than 10 days. Talk to your healthcare provider for more information. If testing is available in your community, it may be recommended by your healthcare provider. You can be with others after you receive two negative test results in a row, at least 24 hours apart.

If testing is not available in your area, your doctor should work with an infectious disease expert at your local health department to determine if you are likely to spread COVID-19 to others and need to stay home longer.

For Anyone Who Has Been Around a Person with COVID-19

It is important to remember that anyone who has close contact with someone with COVID-19 should stay home for 14 days **after exposure** based on the time it takes to develop illness.

For healthcare professionals

Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Suspected or Confirmed COVID-19

I Think or Know I had COVID-19, and I had Symptoms. When can I be Around Others?

I Think or Know I had COVID-19, and I had Symptoms. When can I be Around Others?

If you have or think you might have COVID-19, it is important to stay home and away from others. When you can be around others depends on different factors for different situations.

I Had COVID-19, But No Symptoms. When Can I Be with Others?

I Had COVID-19, But No Symptoms. When Can I Be with Others?

If you have or think you might have COVID-19, it is important to stay home and away from others. When you can be around others depends on different factors for different situations.

More information

What to Do If You Are Sick

Caring for Someone at Home

Quarantine and Isolation

Symptom-Based Strategy to Discontinue Isolation for Persons with COVID-19