

Timeframe for Self-Isolation/Quarantine Based on Testing Result

The purpose of **quarantine** is to keep people who might have been exposed (but not sick) to COVID-19 away from others. **Isolation** is to keep sick people and those infected with the COVID-19 virus away from those who are not infected. Self-quarantine/isolation are voluntary practices to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

It is expected that any person getting a COVID-19 diagnostic test (nasal swab or saliva) will self-quarantine after specimen collection **AND** are advised of the results of their test, unless otherwise directed by those administering the test. These recommendations are not for individuals who got a serologic test (antibody). Depending on the test result, see below for the length of time that the individual should self-isolate/self-quarantine. If an individual who tests COVID-19 positive has a weakened immune system (immunocompromised) due to a health condition or medication, they may need to isolate longer than 10 days. They should speak to their healthcare provider for more information.

	Symptomatic Tested +	Symptomatic Tested –	Asymptomatic Tested +	Asymptomatic Tested –	Asymptomatic Tested –	Asymptomatic Not/Never tested
				No COVID-19 household* or close contacts* or traveler from impacted area*	But is a household* or close contact* or traveler from impacted area*	But is a household* or close contact* or traveler from impacted area*
Timeframe for Self-Quarantine or Self-isolation	10 days since symptoms first began AND 24 hours (1 full day) fever-free without use of fever-reducing medications AND improvement in symptoms	At least 24 hours (1 full day) after symptoms go away NOTE: If person is a household or close contact, or a traveler from impacted area, they should complete 14-day quarantine	10 days after specimen collection, assuming no symptoms develop [^]	No self-quarantine days required	14 days from last known exposure with the COVID-19 + person NOTE: Household contacts should begin quarantine as soon as aware of exposure to COVID-19 + person and continue the quarantine for an additional 14 days AFTER the contact’s isolation ends. Contacts who develop symptoms [^] or who test positive should isolate.	

COVID-19 incubation period is 2-14 days. Symptoms often appear 5-6 days after exposure but may appear up to 14 days after exposure. A person is considered infectious two days before they test + or develop symptoms. However, some individuals do not develop symptoms and may expose others without knowing.

***Household contacts** are individuals who live in the same house as a lab confirmed COVID-19 case. **Close contacts** are individuals who were within 6 feet of a lab confirmed COVID-19 case for a prolonged period (10 minutes or more) or had direct contact with the infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., were coughed on). Walking past a lab confirmed COVID-19 case or just being in the same building does NOT qualify as being a close contact. **Traveler from impacted area** refers to states/territories/countries with increasing COVID-19 cases with a positive test rate higher than 10 per 100,000 residents or areas with 10% or higher positivity rate over a seven-day rolling average.

[^]Asymptomatic positive individuals who develop symptoms during their self-quarantine timeframe, should self-isolate and refer to the “Symptomatic, Tested +” column.

Refer to NJDOH Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions and Home Isolation Guidance for more information. Updated guidance recommends time-based over test-based strategy for return to work. Re-testing is not recommended in most cases, it results in prolonged isolation of persons who continue to shed detectable SARS-CoV-2 RNA but are no longer infectious. https://www.state.nj.us/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID-QuickRef_Discont_Isolation_and_TBP.pdf (July 2020)

NOTE: Recommendation for self-isolation/quarantine is to stay/sleep in a separate room from others living in the home and use separate bathroom (if possible). This includes not being in close contact with household members (i.e., not sharing meals and spending time together in common areas) or going to work or out in public other than for health care. Wash hands often and clean and disinfect household items.

To locate a testing site near you: covid19.nj.gov/testing