

WHAT TO DO IF YOU TEST POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

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If you test positive for COVID-19, isolate at home away from other people and begin reaching out to close contacts immediately. The Health Department is conducting contact tracing for people at higher risk to better protect Vermonters against the most severe effects of COVID-19. You may not receive a phone call from a contact tracer, but you still need to follow the steps below to stop further spread.

People with COVID-19 can spread the virus to others. **If you test positive for COVID-19, even if you are vaccinated or never have symptoms, isolate as soon as you receive your test result and then notify your close contacts.** Isolation means staying home and away from other people – including the people who live with you – for at least 5 days. The state of Vermont has adopted the [CDC guidance](#) on isolation and quarantine with additional guidance around recommended testing.

IF YOU HAVE A POSITIVE TEST (PCR, LAMP, OR ANTIGEN)

This guidance is for people who are vaccinated, boosted or unvaccinated.

- Stay home and [isolate](#) for 5 days.
- You can leave your home after day 5 if:
 - o you have two negative antigen tests performed at least 24 hours apart beginning no earlier than day 4*
 - o AND you never had symptoms, or your symptoms have improved and you feel better
 - o AND you have had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers
 - o AND you **wear a mask** around others through day 10.
- [Notify your close contacts](#) that you have tested positive.

*Testing is strongly recommended. If you are unable to get a test and you meet all other requirements you can end isolation after 5 days.

This guidance does not apply to [health care workers](#). Sector specific guidance will be posted soon.

Start following the guidance below on [how to isolate](#) and [notify your close contacts](#) as soon as you receive your positive test result. You may get a call from the Health Department. If you have questions about this guidance, or if you miss a call from the Health Department, call us at 802-863-7240.

Tell your health care provider that you tested positive for COVID-19. They may have guidance for you to take care of your own health. If you need to see a health care provider but don't have one, call 2-1-1 to be connected to care, or contact the nearest [federally qualified health center](#) or one of [Vermont's free & referral clinics](#).

If you are over 65 or have a high-risk medical condition and have mild to moderate symptoms, reach out to your health care provider to ask about [COVID-19 therapeutics](#) — as soon as you get your positive test result. These treatments can reduce the chance of being hospitalized. You can also get a pulse oximeter from the Health Department by calling 802-863-7240. This small device that clips onto your fingertip measures your pulse and oxygen levels and can help you know how sick you are.

Report your self-test results to the Health Department. You can do that by choosing the option to automatically provide your results to your local health department or by filling out the [Vermont COVID-19 Self-Test Result Reporting Form](#).

[REPORT SELF-TEST RESULTS](#)

Check the [Follow-up Testing Guide](#) to understand next steps based on your test results, whether or not you have symptoms and the type of test you took.

[NOTIFY YOUR CLOSE CONTACTS](#)

It's important for people in close contact with you to know that they may have been exposed to COVID-19. Especially with the more contagious variants, the sooner people know they may have come into contact with the virus, the sooner they can take steps to protect themselves and to prevent further spread in the community.

Step 1 – Identify your infectious period.

Step 2 – Make a list of your close contacts.

Step 3 – Notify your close contacts that they may have been exposed to COVID-19.

ISOLATE AT HOME

Most people with mild illness can recover at home. While there is no specific treatment, you should get plenty of rest, drink plenty of fluids, and take fever-reducing medication if needed.

- Stay home, except to get medical care or if you feel unsafe at home. [Wear a mask](#) if you need to leave home.
- Call ahead before visiting your health care provider or emergency department and tell them you are isolating because you have COVID-19.
- As much as possible, stay in a specific room in your home and use a separate bathroom.
- Stay at least 6 feet (or 2 meters) away from others in your home at all times.
- Wear a mask if you're in any room with other people or pets, unless you have trouble breathing.
- Don't share household items.
- Monitor your blood oxygen levels. People diagnosed with COVID-19 may have below-normal levels of oxygen in their blood before they feel short of breath. Finding low oxygen levels early can help you know to seek medical care sooner. This could make the disease less severe.
- If you cannot avoid close contact with someone you take care of (for example, your children), then they should quarantine while you are sick. They should also quarantine after you have recovered. Learn more about [close contacts and quarantine](#).

How to do daily cleaning and washing
When to get medical care immediately

END ISOLATION ONCE YOU HAVE RECOVERED

If you test positive, regardless of vaccination status, everyone must isolate - or stay home - for 5 days.

You can leave your home after day 5 if:

- you have two negative antigen tests performed at least 24 hours apart beginning no earlier than day 4
- you never had symptoms or your symptoms have improved and you feel better
- AND you have had no fever for at least 24 hours without the use of medicine that reduces fevers
- AND you **wear a mask** around others through day 10.