

COVID-19 Exposure - No Symptoms

Definition

- Exposure (close contact) to a person with confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection
- Confirmed patients have a positive COVID-19 lab test
- Suspected patients are diagnosed as probable COVID-19 by a doctor, based on symptoms
- You or your child have NO symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough or trouble breathing)
- Vaccine status determines if you need to home quarantine after COVID-19 Exposure
- **Updated: September 7, 2022** (version 18)

Health Information

Exposure to COVID-19: Levels of Risk

- **Household Close Contact.** Lives with a person who has positive test for COVID-19. This carries the highest risk of transmitting the infection.
- **Other Close Contact.** The CDC defines 6 feet (2 meters) as how far coughing can spread the virus. How long the close contact lasts can also be important. Prolonged close contact is defined as a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. (CDC). Close contact includes kissing, hugging or sharing eating and drinking utensils. It also includes close conversations. Direct contact with secretions of a person with COVID-19 is also close contact. Includes being in the same childcare room, classroom or carpool. These exposures are usually lower risk than living with an infected person.
- **In Same Building - Low Risk Exposure.** Being in the same school, place of worship, workplace or building carries a small risk for exposure. This risk increases if several people have the infection.
- **In Same City - Low Risk Exposure.** Living in or travel from a city or country where there is major community spread of COVID-19, also carries a small risk. The CDC lists these "hot spots". Outdoor contacts are much safer than indoor contacts.

COVID-19 Facts

- **COVID-19 Symptoms:** The most common symptoms are cough and fever. Some patients progress to shortness of breath. Other common symptoms are chills, shivering (shaking), runny nose, sore throat, muscle pains or body aches, headache, and loss of smell and taste. The CDC also includes the following less common symptoms: fatigue (tiredness), nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Some people may have very mild symptoms. Some can have no symptoms, but still spread the disease
- **Incubation Period:** average 5 days (range 2 to 10 days) after coming in contact with the secretions of a person who has COVID-19.
- **No Symptoms but Infected:** Over 30% of infected patients have no symptoms.
- **Mild Infections:** 80% of those with symptoms have a mild illness, much like normal flu or a bad cold. The symptoms usually last 2 weeks.
- **Severe Infections:** 20% of those with symptoms that are not vaccinated develop trouble breathing from viral pneumonia. Many of these need to be admitted to the hospital. People with complications generally recover in 3 to 6 weeks. Severe infections are very rare in people who are up to date with vaccines and get all recommended boosters when eligible.
- **Deaths:** Children generally have a mild illness and recover quickly. Pediatric deaths are very rare. Older adults, especially those with chronic lung disease, heart disease, diabetes, obesity or weak immune systems, have the highest death rates. The overall adult death rate is around 2 per 1000.
- **Vaccine:** Safe and highly effective vaccines are available. At this time, vaccines have been tested and are FDA approved for children 6 months and older. During the first 6 months, babies are usually protected by antibodies from their mother. This is true if she is up-to-date on her COVID-19 vaccines.
- **Breakthrough cases** are COVID-19 infections that happen despite vaccine protection. They are more common with new variants. Most do not cause serious symptoms. The vaccine prevents almost all complications, hospital admissions and deaths.
- **Booster Vaccines:** The CDC recommended a booster shot for those 5 years and older. Stay up to

date by getting all recommended boosters when eligible. These booster shots may reduce the rate of COVID-19 breakthrough infections.

- **Treatment:** New treatments for severe COVID-19 are available. They are mainly used for hospitalized patients and high-risk patients.

Trusted Sources for Accurate COVID-19 Information - CDC and AAP

- To meet the high demand for COVID-19 information, when possible, find your answers online. Here are the most reliable websites:

- CDC website: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>

- American Academy of Pediatrics parent website: www.healthychildren.org

- Always follow the most current CDC recommendations if they are different than those in this document.

Care Advice

1. Exposure but No Symptoms - Overview:

- Although you may have been or were exposed to COVID-19, you do not currently have any symptoms of that infection. COVID-19 infections start within 10 days following the last exposure.
- Since it's been less than 10 days, the exposed person is still at risk for getting sick with COVID-19.
- You need to watch for symptoms until 10 days have passed.
- Stay at home and follow this medical advice.

2. You Do Not Need to See Your Doctor:

- The exposed person does not have any symptoms. Exposed people don't need to see a doctor.
- You do need to get a COVID-19 test. See Testing #3 below.
- If you become sick and develop more than mild symptoms, you may need to see your doctor.
- You can find the answers to most of your questions here or online.

3. COVID-19 Testing - When and Where:

- Testing is offered at many sites. Where to get it can be different for every city. Your doctor may provide COVID tests in their office. Many retail clinics and urgent care centers offer testing. Community drive-through sites or pharmacies may also be testing site options. At home self- tests can also be bought in most drugstores (such as Walgreens).
- Diagnostic tests: these are performed on nasal or mouth secretions. The tests can tell us if you have a COVID-19 infection now. Timing is important on when to do this test:
 - **With Symptoms.** Get a test within 3 days of onset of symptoms.
 - **Without Symptoms but with a COVID-19 close contact.** Get a test on day 5 after the last day of exposure.
- If you have testing questions, call your doctor during office hours.

4. Measure Temperature:

- Measure the exposed person's temperature 2 times each day. Do this until 10 days after exposure to COVID-19.
- Report any fevers or respiratory symptoms to your family's doctor.
- Early detection of symptoms and quarantine is the only way to reduce spread of the disease.

5. • **Home Quarantine Is Not Needed for Those Exposed and have NO symptoms:**
 - Wear a mask around others for 10 days.
 - If no symptoms, get tested on day 5 after last close contact with an infected person. If positive, will need to start Home isolation.
 - Children under 2 years: Stay at home for a full 10 days. Reason: they don't wear masks.
 - **Quarantine Questions for Your Doctor:** Home quarantine can be complicated. A parent may need to return to work. Someone in the household may be elderly or have a serious medical problem. If you have additional questions, call your doctor during office hours. Your doctor is the best resource for up-to-date information on COVID-19.
6. **Day 10 or Later After Close Contact and No Symptoms:**
 - The COVID-19 infection starts within 10 days of an exposure.
 - The exposed person has no symptoms of respiratory infection (such as fever or cough) during the 10 days after an exposure.
 - They should be safe from getting COVID-19.

Call Your Doctor If

- Fever occurs
- Cough or trouble breathing occur
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 occur
- You think you or your child needs to be seen
- You have other questions or concerns

Pediatric Care Advice

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