

How to quarantine or isolate at home if you have or may have COVID-19



Quarantine and isolation can help to prevent the spread of COVID-19 to others. This is especially important with the spread of variants of concern in Canada. Follow your local public health authority's advice on when and how to quarantine or isolate.

If you've travelled outside of Canada recently, advice for your quarantine or isolation period may be different. Consult the latest travel restrictions, exemptions and advice at [Travel.gc.ca/travel-covid](https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid).

Quarantine

Quarantine if you have **no symptoms** and you've had an exposure to someone who has been diagnosed with or may have COVID-19.

If you've been tested for COVID-19 and are waiting for your results, you must quarantine until:

- › you have received negative results **or**
- › your local public health authority tells you that you no longer need to quarantine

There may be different quarantine requirements if you or any of your household members have been vaccinated against COVID-19. Follow the instructions from your local public health authority.

How to quarantine

When in quarantine, you must:

- › stay in your home or co-living setting
 - if you live with the person who exposed you, avoid further contact with them to limit repeated exposure
- › monitor yourself for symptoms (even if you have just one mild symptom)
- › record your temperature daily or as directed by your local public health authority
- › avoid using fever-reducing medications like acetaminophen or ibuprofen as much as possible
 - these medications could hide an early symptom of COVID-19
- › follow your local public health authority's advice on testing instructions

If you start to develop symptoms during quarantine, you must:

- › isolate yourself away from others as soon as you notice even one mild symptom
- › consult your local public health authority immediately for instructions on testing and isolation requirements
 - contact your health care provider if you have questions or concerns about your health



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

Isolation

Isolate if:

- › you've been diagnosed with COVID-19, whether you have symptoms or not
- › you have a positive result on a COVID-19 test, including a rapid self-test kit
- › you have **any** symptom of COVID-19, even if mild, and have:
 - had an exposure to someone who has been diagnosed with or may have COVID-19 **or**
 - been tested for COVID-19 and are waiting to hear the results **or**
 - been told by your local public health authority that you need to isolate

If you're isolating at home, your household members may need to quarantine after their last exposure to you. Your local public health authority will determine their length of quarantine based on a variety of factors, including:

- › vaccination status **and**
- › how well they can separate from you in your home or co-living setting
 - for instance, whether you have access to a separate bedroom and washroom

How to isolate

- › Go directly to and stay in your home or co-living setting.
- › Monitor your symptoms if you have any.
 - Immediately contact your health care provider or local public health authority and follow their instructions if your symptoms get worse.
 - Call 911 or your local emergency number if you develop severe symptoms.
- › Follow advice from your local public health authority for instructions on testing.

Reducing risk of spread in your household

Your local public health authority may advise you to quarantine or isolate somewhere other than your home based on a risk assessment.

Public health measures to follow

If you're in quarantine or isolation, you should:

- › follow all advice and direction from your local public health authority

- › keep your space well ventilated
- › wear a respirator (if unavailable, wear a well-fitting medical mask)
- › maximize physical distance from other household members
- › frequently clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces and objects in your home
- › wash your hands often with soap and water
 - if unavailable, use hand sanitizer that's at least 60% alcohol
- › avoid close contact with your pets

Wear a respirator (like an N95 or KN95) when you:

- › have to leave your quarantine or isolation location (for example, to seek medical attention)
- › are in a shared indoor space by yourself or with others, like a hallway or kitchen
- › are in a shared outdoor space (like a balcony or backyard) with members of your household
- › are receiving care (either direct physical contact or close interactions)

Do **not** wear a respirator or mask if you have trouble breathing while wearing it.

Your caregivers and household members should also wear a respirator when:

- › providing care to you
- › in a shared space with you

This is especially important for those who:

- › are at risk of more severe disease or outcomes from COVID-19
- › live in an overcrowded setting

If a **respirator** is unavailable in these situations, wear a well-fitting medical mask. If neither are available, properly wear a well-constructed and well-fitting non-medical mask.

Children

Children under the age of 2 years should not wear masks. Children 2 to 5 years of age may wear a mask if they:

- › can tolerate it
- › are supervised
- › know how to take it on or off

Children older than 5 years of age should wear a mask in the same situations or settings as adults.

Actions to avoid

While in quarantine or isolation, do **not**:

- › visit public areas
- › go to work or school
- › share personal items
- › visit friends or family
- › have guests over to your home
- › participate in household group activities like:
 - shared meals
 - family games
 - watching television together
- › leave your home or co-living setting unless you need medical care
- › share a washroom with household members, but if this isn't possible:
 - follow public health measures when in a shared space
 - put the toilet lid down before flushing to limit spread
- › sleep in the same room with household members, but if this isn't possible:
 - make sure the space is well ventilated
 - maximize physical distancing (for example, sleep in separate beds positioned head to toe)
- › have contact with anyone at risk of more severe disease or outcomes (based on their age or chronic medical condition)

If you develop severe symptoms

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you develop severe symptoms, such as:

- › trouble breathing or severe shortness of breath
- › persistent pressure or pain in the chest
- › new onset of confusion
- › difficulty waking up or staying awake
- › pale, grey or blue-coloured skin, lips or nail beds

If you take an ambulance to the hospital, tell the dispatcher that you have or may have COVID-19.

If you take a private vehicle to the hospital, call ahead to let them know that you have or may have COVID-19. Follow any directions provided.

While travelling in a private vehicle, follow strict individual public health measures to reduce the risk of transmission and:

- › wear a respirator (if unavailable, wear a well-fitting medical mask) unless experiencing difficulty breathing
 - all other passengers should also wear a respirator
- › minimize the number of passengers in the vehicle
- › maximize physical distance (sit in the back of the car away from the driver)
- › open all windows to improve ventilation if possible and safe to do so

Do **not** use public transportation to seek medical care unless you have no choice.

For more information, visit

Canada.ca/coronavirus or contact 1-833-784-4397