

YOU ARE A CLOSE CONTACT TO A COVID-19 CASE, NOW WHAT?

This guidance is for people who were identified as a **Close Contact** to a COVID-19 positive individual. This is defined as someone within 6 feet for 15 cumulative minutes or more in a 24-hour period while the case is deemed to be infectious (48 hours prior to their onset of symptoms; for asymptomatic cases, 48 hours prior to the date they were tested.)

Signs and symptoms of COVID-19

The most common symptoms of novel coronavirus are fever and cough, difficulty breathing, loss of taste/smell, sore throat, body aches, headache, chills, diarrhea, and nausea/vomiting. These symptoms can also be due to many other illnesses. If you develop a fever or any symptoms, it doesn't mean you have COVID-19, but you should immediately contact your health care provider for COVID-19 testing.

Monitoring Period

Remain at home or in a comparable setting for the duration of your quarantine period. Avoid congregate settings, public activities, and practice social distancing. This means you should remain out of public places where close contact with others may occur (e.g., shopping centers, movie theaters, stadiums), workplaces, schools and other classroom settings, and public conveyances (e.g., bus, subway, taxi, side share) for the duration of your monitoring period unless approved by the state or local health department. Close contacts will still need to quarantine, unless both the infected person and close contact were wearing a mask at all times during the exposure; this would exempt the contact from being quarantined.

You are recommended to monitor yourself for symptoms for **14 days** following your last potential exposure to a person with COVID-19. This does **NOT** mean that you will get sick with COVID-19.

There are options for close contacts to reduce the number of days they will need to quarantine following an exposure to a COVID-positive individual.

- If you remain symptom-free, you may reduce your quarantine period from 14 days to 10 days after your last exposure to a COVID-positive individual.
- If you are tested and receive a negative result from a viral COVID-19 test (PCR or rapid antigen), you can reduce your quarantine to seven days after the case the case is released from isolation. This test can be collected no earlier than 48 hours prior to your quarantine release date, so the earliest you can be tested is day six from your exposure date. You must continue to quarantine while awaiting test results.

After stopping quarantine, you should

- Watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
- If you have symptoms, immediately self-isolate and contact your local public health authority or healthcare provider.
- Wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash your hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to [prevent the spread of COVID-19](#).

Residents of long-term care facilities and other congregate living settings are exempt from the new guidance and should continue to quarantine for the full 14 days.

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A quarantine calculator can be found at health.nd.gov/closecontact.

Consider being tested 7-10 days after your last exposure to a COVID-19 case, even if you do not have symptoms and plan to quarantine for the full 14-day period. Free public testing throughout North Dakota is available to anyone who would like to be tested for COVID-19. Click [here](#) for updated information on free testing events.

If you become sick and are tested for COVID-19 during this period and are found to be **Positive**. The NDDoH will work with you on continuing your monitoring as a confirmed case of COVID-19.

Individuals in your household that are contacts to contacts do not have to quarantine unless they have been notified that they are also a direct close contact to a confirmed case.

Check your temperature and symptoms

It is very important for you to monitor your health daily so that you can be taken care of and treated quickly if you get sick. Based on what is known from other coronavirus infections, 14 days is the longest time between when you were last exposed to COVID-19 and when symptoms begin.

- Take your temperature (use as directed in the thermometer instructions) **2 times a day:**
 - **once in the morning and again in the evening** (if you forget, take your temperature as soon as you remember)
- You should also check your temperature anytime you feel like you have a fever or feel feverish.
- Write down your temperature twice a day, every day along with any of the symptoms listed below.

If you have fever (100.4°F or higher), cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms such as loss of taste/smell, chills, sore throat, body aches, headache, diarrhea, or nausea/vomiting, you should be tested for COVID-19.

What should I do if I become ill during this monitoring period?

Unless it is an emergency, DO NOT GO to a clinic or hospital without first calling ahead. Calling first will help the clinic or hospital prepare to greet you and take care of you in the safest possible way. If you must go to the hospital before calling, notify staff immediately that you are being monitored for COVID-19. For additional COVID-19 questions, call the NDDoH public health hotline at 1-866-207-2880, between 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Saturday.