



# Instructions for Patients Who Test Positive for COVID-19

- If you have tested positive for COVID-19 it means at the time the test was performed you were infected with the virus.
- Testing positive does not mean that you will feel sick. Most patients with COVID-19 do not become seriously ill.
- Some patients do develop more serious illness, which is why it is important to monitor for certain signs and symptoms.
- Even if you don't develop symptoms or get sick, you can still pass the virus on to others. It's important that you do everything you can to help prevent further spread of COVID-19.

## What Are The Symptoms?

You should watch for the following signs and symptoms. If you develop any of these, you should seek medical attention at the nearest Emergency Department.

### If You Believe You Are Severely Ill, You Should Call 911.

- New and worsening shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Prolonged chest pain that does not result from coughing
- Bluish coloration around your mouth, or of your nail beds that you have not had before
- Severe abdominal or back pain
- Repeated vomiting/vomiting that won't stop
- Inability to think clearly/confusion/mental status changes

### Important Resources

- Your Primary Care Provider
- Vermont Department of Health: 802.863.7240 or online: [www.healthvermont.gov](http://www.healthvermont.gov)
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC): [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- In the event of an emergency call 911

It is very important that you alert EMS personnel and/or the receiving team at the Emergency Department that you have tested positive for COVID-19 to allow them to care for you safely and properly.

## Who Do I Need To Tell About My Test Results?

### If You Were Within Six Feet Of Another Person:

1. While you were experiencing symptoms
2. During the 72 hours (three days) after your test was performed

Please try and let them know about your test results. Generally, this will include family and other household members, friends, co-workers, etc.

### Examples Of Close Contact Include:

- You shared a meal with a person, especially if you shared utensils, glassware or a straw
- You sat next to each other while watching a television show or movie
- You slept in the same bed or same room
- You worked next to a person (within six feet) for more than a few minutes during a shift

People that you've had close contact with should isolate themselves, if possible and should contact their primary care provider or the Vermont Department of Health.

If they develop symptoms (*cough, fatigue, muscle aches, fever*) they **MUST** isolate and call their primary care provider or the Vermont Department of Health.

## Should My Household Members Get Tested?

Currently, there is a large backlog of cases in Vermont and testing for outpatients is not readily available, recommended or necessary.

### However, Testing In Most Cases Will Not Change What You And Your Household Should Do:

- You and your family members need to isolate
- Pay attention for signs and symptoms of concern
- Remember, the vast majority of people with COVID-19 do not become seriously ill

## Should My Household Members Isolate?

Yes! If you test positive for COVID-19, most likely others in your household are harboring the virus even if they don't feel sick. Members of your household should isolate and do regular symptom checks.

## How Do I Isolate?

1. Make sure you are doing regular symptom checks. If you develop signs or symptoms of concern, seek medical guidance/attention as described.
2. Household members should stay in another room or be separated from you as much as possible – you must maintain at least six feet of distance between you and household members at all times.
3. Household members should use a separate bedroom and bathroom, if available.
4. Prohibit visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home.
5. Household members should care for any pets in the home.
  - Do not handle pets or other animals while you are sick, if at all possible
6. Make sure that shared spaces in the home have good air flow, such as an opened window, weather permitting.
7. Wash your hands!
  - Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
  - Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains 60 to 95% alcohol covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
  - Soap and water should be used if hands are visibly dirty.
8. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
9. If possible, you should wear a facemask when you are around other people.
10. Avoid sharing food items with your household. You should not snack from the same bag, and should have a household member dish out food at meal times and leave it for you (*maintain six feet of distance!*). You also should not “go back for seconds” as this could contaminate meal items.
11. Avoid sharing household items with your household. You should not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding, or other items.
  - After you use these items, you should wash them thoroughly
12. Clean all “high-touch” surfaces, such as counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables, every day.
13. Use a household cleaning spray or wipe, according to the label instructions. Labels contain instructions for safe and effective use of the cleaning product including precautions you should take when applying the product, such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
  - Be especially sure to clean any surfaces that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.
14. Wash laundry thoroughly.

## I Tested Positive – When Can I Stop Isolating?

### If You Tested Positive And Experienced Symptoms, You May Stop Home Isolation When:

1. You no longer have a fever (*and haven't used aspirin, Tylenol® or Motrin® to control fever*)
2. Your respiratory symptoms have improved.
3. You test negative on two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected over 24 hours apart

### If You Tested Positive But Didn't Have Symptoms, You May Stop Home Isolation When:

1. At least seven days have passed since the date of your positive COVID-19 diagnostic test
2. You have not developed symptoms, including fever

## I Live in a Household with Someone Who Tested Positive – When Can I Stop Isolating?

### If You Were Exposed To Someone Who Tested Positive And Experienced Symptoms, You May Stop Home Isolation When:

1. It has been at least seven days since symptoms started for the person who tested positive
2. Respiratory symptoms in the person who tested positive have improved, not worsened, for 72 hour
3. The person with the positive test hasn't had a fever for at least 72 hours (*and hasn't used aspirin, Tylenol® or Motrin® to control fever*)

### If You Were Exposed To Someone Who Tested Positive And Didn't Experience Symptoms, You May Stop Home Isolation When:

1. At least seven days have passed since the start of isolation
2. The person with the positive test hasn't developed any symptoms, including a fever
3. You haven't developed a fever for at least 72 hours (*and have not used aspirin, Tylenol® or Motri® to control fever*)

## Pets and COVID-19

If you have COVID-19, you should limit exposure just like you would with another member of your household. Always wash your hands before preparing pet meals or giving treats.

If you are experiencing symptoms, keep the same separation from your pets as you would from other household members. Avoid direct contact with your pets, including petting, snuggling, being kissed or licked, and sharing food. Service animals should be permitted to remain with their handlers.

**At this point there is no evidence that companion animals, including pets, can spread COVID-19.**