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## Guidance for Individuals with COVID-19

Updated February 22, 2021

This guidance is for individuals that have been confirmed to be infected with the COVID-19 virus.

Isolation recommendations for **lowans with COVID-19** state that lowans should stay at home and isolate themselves from other people and animals in the home until all three of the following conditions have been met:

- No fever for at least 24 hours (without the use medicine that reduces fevers), **AND**
- other symptoms have improved (for example, when cough or shortness of breath have improved) **AND**
- at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If you are showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion
- Inability to wake or stay awake
- Bluish lips or face

For most people, symptoms last a few days, and people usually feel better after a week. You may use over-the-counter medicines for fever or other symptoms. Make sure to follow the package recommendations and consult your pharmacist or healthcare provider with any questions. You should drink a lot of fluids and rest. While recovering, you may want to consider having the items delivered through a delivery service, if possible. Continue to take care of your pet(s), and limit contact between yourself and your pet(s) when possible.

More information can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/care-for-someone.html>

### What does self-isolation mean?

- Stay home and do not go to school, work, public areas, or attend gatherings.
- Do not use public transportation, ride sharing or taxis.
- Postpone all travel.
- Wash your hands often and practice good hygiene.
- Postpone all non-essential medical appointments until you have completed your 10 days of self-isolation. If you have an essential medical appointment during this time, please work with your healthcare provider to help coordinate the visit.

## What about the people I live with?

- Family members or other persons who reside in your home may remain in your home, but you should stay in a specific room away from others in your home and use a separate bathroom (if available).
- CDC recommends household contacts quarantine for 14 days (one incubation period) after the last exposure to the infected individual. If you are not able to maintain a distance over 6 feet from your household contacts, the quarantine period for household contact(s) will not end until 14 days from your recovery date. This would mean that the quarantine period could extend up to 24 days for contacts caring for infected individuals. There are acceptable alternatives to shorten the quarantine period for close contacts. If an alternative option is used, it is important to continue to self-monitor for symptoms **AND** strictly adhere to wearing a mask until 14 days from the last date of contact with the infected individual has passed. Information on alternative options are enclosed.
- More information can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>.

## What if I have been around others not in my household?

For COVID-19, close contacts are persons less than 6 feet away from an infectious person for more than 15 minutes in a 24-hour period, starting from 2 days before illness onset or testing. This is regardless of mask use.

CDC recommends close contacts quarantine at home for 14 days from the last exposure to the infected person. However, there are acceptable alternatives to shorten the quarantine period. If an alternative option is used, it is important to continue to self-monitor for symptoms **AND** strictly adhere to wearing a mask until 14 days from the last date of contact with the infected individual has passed. Information on alternative options are enclosed.

During the quarantine period, close contacts should not attend work or school. They should separate themselves from others in the home if possible. All other household members may continue with normal activities unless the quarantined individual becomes ill. If illness occurs, everyone should remain home and the ill contact should contact a medical provider.

According to CDC, COVID-19 symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. Anyone that appears ill, or states that they have been ill, should follow the guidelines for individuals ill with COVID-19. People with these symptoms, or combination of symptoms, may have COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Contacts to COVID-19 should contact their healthcare provider or Test Iowa regarding testing. Testing should not occur until 48 hours from the last exposure. Even if the contact to a case of COVID-19 has a negative test, they need to complete the 14 days of quarantine.

## Alternative quarantine guidance for individuals identified as a close contact to a COVID-19 case:

Quarantine guidance for individuals identified as a close contact of a COVID-19 case Individuals exposed to COVID-19 may develop symptoms from 2-14 days after exposure. However, individuals identified as a close contact to someone infectious with COVID-19 can reduce the length of their quarantine from 14 days via the following options:

- Quarantine can end after Day 10 if no symptoms have developed.
  - Quarantine can end after Day 7 if the exposed person tests negative and no symptoms have developed. The specimen must be collected within 48 hours before the end of quarantine (i.e. not earlier than Day 5). The quarantine cannot be discontinued earlier than after Day 7.
- In both cases, the individual must continue to monitor for symptoms and wear a mask when around others through Day 14.

## **Public health recommendations for vaccinated persons exposed to COVID-19**

While mRNA COVID-19 vaccines have demonstrated high efficacy at preventing severe and symptomatic COVID-19, there is currently limited information on how much the vaccines might reduce transmission and how long protection lasts.

At this time, vaccinated persons should continue to follow current guidance to protect themselves and others, including wearing a mask, staying at least 6 feet away from others, avoiding crowds, avoiding poorly ventilated spaces, covering coughs and sneezes, washing hands often, following CDC travel guidance, and following any applicable workplace or school guidance, including guidance related to personal protective equipment use or SARS-CoV-2 testing.

**However, vaccinated persons with an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the following criteria<sup>†</sup>:**

- Are fully vaccinated (i.e.,  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of the second dose in a 2-dose series, or  $\geq 2$  weeks following receipt of one dose of a single-dose vaccine).
- Are within 3 months following receipt of the last dose in the series.
- Have remained asymptomatic since the current COVID-19 exposure.

Persons who do not meet all 3 of the above criteria should continue to follow current quarantine guidance after exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19. Healthcare personnel are not required to quarantine if they meet all of the above criteria. However, vaccinated inpatients and residents in healthcare settings still need to quarantine, regardless of meeting criteria, due to unknown vaccine effectiveness in this population.

For additional questions or concerns, please contact your healthcare provider.