San Francisco Department of Public Health

**Home Quarantine Instructions**

What to do if your child was exposed to COVID-19 <u>and</u> was not fully vaccinated to COVID-19

If your child had close contact with someone who has COVID-19, they may be infected. *They could spread the infection to others, even before they have symptoms or test positive.*

Here's what you need to do:

1. Keep your child at home and away from others.

- Your child <u>must</u> stay at home, except to get tested or get medical care. Try to keep them away from people in your home who are higher-risk for getting very sick from COVID-19. See "[Protect others in your home.](#)"

- If your child had close contact at school and is being allowed to attend school, see the section on [attending school during quarantine (modified quarantine)](#).

- Do not let visitors inside your home, unless you need help to take care of someone in your home.

- If your child leaves home to get tested or get medical care, avoid public transportation, taxis, or ride-shares (Lyft, Uber) if possible. For more information, see www.sfcdcp.org/safertransit.

- Call 3-1-1 if your child cannot quarantine where you live, or if you need food or other resources to keep your child at home.
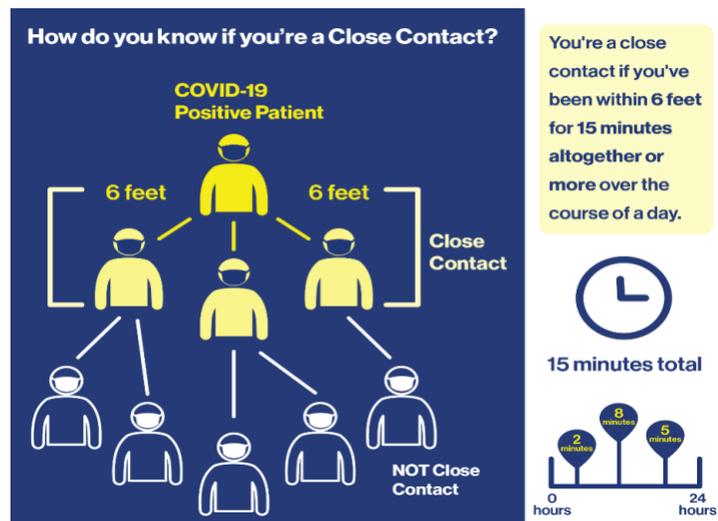
2. Have your child tested for COVID-19

- Make an appointment to have your child tested **5 days after their last close contact**, if they don't develop any symptoms before then.

- Have your child tested **right away if they develop symptoms** at any point during their quarantine, even if they tested negative earlier during quarantine.

Keep your child at home until the end of their quarantine, even if they test negative before then. They could still be infected. People can test negative early in their infection, and symptoms can take time to appear. <u>Your child cannot return to school/childcare or go to another school, childcare, camp, or program until their quarantine ends even if they test negative before then.</u>

3. Answer phone calls from (916) 262-7553.

This is someone from the San Francisco Department of Public Health calling because your child has been exposed to COVID-19. They can answer your questions about COVID-19 and quarantine, help you get a test for your child, and connect you to food, housing, or other support so you can keep your child away from other people.

Health department staff **will NOT** ask for
- Social Security numbers or immigration status
- Money
- Bank account or credit card numbers

4. Watch for symptoms of COVID-19.

Get your child tested if they start have symptoms, even if they already had a negative COVID-19 test earlier during quarantine. Symptoms can appear up to 14 days after someone is infected. Symptoms include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Loss of taste or smell.
  Children may say that food "tastes bad" or "tastes funny."

- Feeling out of breath or having trouble breathing
- Runny nose or nasal congestion
- Diarrhea, nausea or vomiting
- Feeling unusually tired or weak
- Muscle aches or body aches

Most children and teens with COVID-19 have mild illness and get better at home without needing to see a doctor. Have them rest and drink plenty of fluids if they feel sick. If they are at least 6 months old, over-the-counter medicine like acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or ibuprofen (Motrin® or Advil®) can help with fever or pain.

Call your child's doctor if their symptoms get worse, especially they have trouble breathing. See "When to get medical care" below.

How to get a COVID-19 test for your child

- Contact your child's doctor or the clinic listed on their health insurance card.
- If your child does not have health insurance or a regular doctor, call
  - SFDPH New Patient Appointment Call Center for COVID-19 at 415-682-1740
  - Mission Neighborhood Health Center at 415-552-3870 x2217
- For other places where your child can get tested, see https://sf.gov/gettested

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Ending quarantine: When can my child safely be around others?

Most children can leave home and be around others after:

- o 7 days have passed since their last close contact (on day 8), if a negative test was collected on day 5 or later of their quarantine and they've had no symptoms during this time.
  The last day that your child has close contact is day 0 of quarantine.
- o 10 days have passed since their last close contact (on day 11) if they've had no symptoms, but didn't get tested on or after day 5.

Keep watching your child closely for COVID-19 symptoms until 14 days after their last close contact. There is still a small chance that your child could be infected and could spread the infection to others.

Children who live in shelters must wait until 14 days have passed since their last close contact without any symptoms (leave home on day 15) without any symptoms, even if they got tested.

If my child has symptoms, when can they leave home and be around others?

If your child develops symptoms, have them tested, even if they had a negative test earlier in quarantine. Keep them at home until they get their test result.

- **If your child has symptoms and tests negative**, they can end quarantine 14 days after their last close contact with the person with COVID-19.
- **If they test positive,** see "If my child tests positive" below.
- **If they have symptoms but don't get tested**, they must wait until all of the following are true:
  - o 14 days have passed since their last close contact with the person with COVID-19 **and**
  - o 10 days have passed since their symptoms started **and**
  - o They haven't had a fever in the last 24 hours, without taking medicine for fever **and**
  - o Their symptoms are improving.

If my child tests positive for COVID-19, when can they leave home?

They must stay home until all of the following are true:

- 10 days have passed since their symptoms started **and**
- They haven't had a fever in the last 24 hours, without taking medicine for fever **and**
- Their symptoms are improving.

If they tested positive but never had any symptoms, they must stay home for 10 days after they were tested.

For detailed information on leaving home after COVID-19 symptoms, exposures and positive tests, see
https://sfdph.org/dph/covid-19/isolation-and-quarantine.asp

Frequently asked questions

Does everyone else at home have to quarantine too?

No. Only people who had close contact with someone with COVID-19 must quarantine. Other people who live with your child can leave home.

What if my child was vaccinated for COVID-19?

If your child was fully vaccinated for COVID-19, they don't have to quarantine as long as they don't have symptoms.

- Consider having them tested 3-5 days after their last close contact. CDC and SFDPH now recommend this because the delta variant can sometimes infect fully vaccinated people.

- Watch for symptoms for the 14 days after their close contact. If your child has symptoms, get them tested <u>and</u> keep them at home until you get the test result.

What if my child already had COVID-19 in the last 3 months?

If your child had COVID-19 in the last 3 months, confirmed by a lab test, they don't have to quarantine, as long as they don't have COVID-19 symptoms.

If your child starts to have symptoms, they must stay at home until you can consult their doctor or clinic. Their doctor will decide if they need to be tested or stay at home, and for how long. If you don't consult your child's doctor and don't get a test, your child must stay home until:

- 10 days have passed since their symptoms started **and**
- They haven't had a fever in the last 24 hours, without taking medicine for fever **and**
- Their symptoms are improving.

My child was exposed to COVID-19 at school. Their school says they must quarantine, but they can go to school. What do we need to do? (modified quarantine)

During the last school year, schools had little-to-no spread of COVID-19, even when community transmission was high. For this reason, the California Department of Public Health allows a "modified quarantine" for elementary, middle and high school students who are exposed to COVID-19 at school while wearing masks.

If the close contact happened at school, <u>and</u> both your child and the infected person were wearing masks the whole time, your child can attend school in-person during their quarantine. They can ride a school bus or take public transportation to and from school.

Your child must:

- Continue to wear a face mask in school **and**
- Get tested for COVID-19 twice a week, **and**
- Remain free of any COVID-19 symptoms during this time.

Your child must stay at home except to go to school. They cannot leave home for activities outside of school. They cannot play wind instruments or do extracurricular activities at school, including school sports, during their modified quarantine. For more information, see CDPH Schools Guidance Q&A .

This modified quarantine only applies to children who were exposed at school. If your child had close contact to COVID-19 <u>outside</u> of school and was not fully vaccinated for COVID-19, they cannot attend school during their quarantine.

Protect your loved ones and others in your home.

It can be scary to think that your child might have COVID-19 and might give it to your family and other people you live with. You can take some simple and important steps to help keep COVID-19 from spreading in your home.

Not everyone can take all these steps, especially with young children. However, by taking as many steps as you can, as much as you can, you can protect those you love and those living with you.

- **Keep your child away from other people in the home**, especially older people, people who are not fully vaccinated for COVID-19, and others who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. See CDC's list of groups at increased risk of severe illness.
- If your child is old enough, have them stay in a separate room as much as they can, especially when eating, sleeping, and other times that their mask is off.
- **If your child is at least 2 years old, have them wear a face mask at home** as much as they can, except when sleeping. **Have everyone else at home wear face masks** around your child and in rooms that your child has been in. For safety, children under 24 months old and anyone else who cannot take off a mask without help should not wear a mask.
- If your child is old enough to stay alone in a room that no one else enters, they do not have to wear a mask in their room.
- **Open windows** if it's safe to do so. The virus that causes COVID-19 can build up in the air indoors, so you'll want to **bring in as much fresh air as possible**. You can also put a fan in front of an open window to blow indoor air out of the house.

  If you live with young children, open windows no wider than 4 inches to keep children from falling out of open windows. You can buy window locks that keep windows from opening more than 4 inches; they are available at most hardware stores. For more information, see sfcdcp.org/covid-ventilation.
- Have your child wash or sanitize their hands often.
- Don't let your child share personal household items, like cups, utensils, and towels.
- Protect yourself and others if you need to take your child to get tested or get medical care.
  - If you have a car, taking your child in your own car is safer for others than riding public transportation, taxis or rideshares (Lyft, Uber). Make sure you and your child both wear masks when sharing a vehicle. Keep the windows open and the fan on maximum, set to fresh air, while in the car with your child.
  - If you and your child can walk or bike, this is safer than sharing a car with your child.

When to get medical care for your child

- **Get medical care if your child has COVID-19 symptoms that are getting worse**, especially if they have trouble breathing. Worrisome signs can include:
  - Feeling out of breath, dizzy or light-headed when they're doing their usual activities at home, like playing, going to the bathroom, showering, or walking around inside.
  - Getting dehydrated because they feel too sick to eat or drink.
- **Seek emergency medical care** immediately for any of these warning signs:
  - Trouble breathing.
  - Chest pain or pressure that is not going away.
  - Being more confused than usual.
  - Trouble waking up or staying awake.
  - Blue-ish lips or face.
- Call ahead to the clinic or emergency room, if you can. Tell them that your child may have COVID-19. If you call 911, tell the operator that your child may have COVID-19. This helps health care staff prepare for your arrival.
- When you arrive at the clinic, tell the staff immediately that your child may have COVID-19.