

WHAT TO DO IF YOU OR SOMEONE ELSE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS COVID-19



LONG COVID ESSENTIALS: A SERIES BY The Sick Times × LONG COVID JUSTICE

With changing and conflicting guidance from national and local public health agencies, it can be confusing to know what to do if you get sick with COVID-19. But by planning, isolating, seeking care, and monitoring your symptoms, you can prevent the spread of COVID-19 and help decrease the risk of adverse health outcomes like Long COVID.

* ISOLATION

1. First, **if you tested positive, you should immediately isolate in your room.** If possible, open all windows and turn on [air purifiers](#) to clean the air, if you have them.
2. All members of the household, including the person who tested positive, should **put on high-quality respirators** or masks.
3. The person who tested positive **should remain in isolation until they have two negative rapid COVID-19 tests 48 hours apart.** Some public health agencies recommend isolating for 5 to 7 days and masking for at least 10 days from the first positive test or onset of symptoms, as people are most contagious during these days. However, [some people can test positive and be infectious](#) for 20 days or more. Negative rapid tests give the best guarantee of safety for leaving isolation.

* NOTIFY YOUR COMMUNITY

1. **Notify everyone in your household and others you could have exposed** in the past 3 to 5 days before you tested positive. This way they can test, isolate, and make their own plans.
2. Since you'll be isolated for at least 5 days, **notify work, school, and other commitments that you've tested positive.**

CONTINUED →

* **SEEK MEDICAL CARE, RADICALLY REST, MONITOR SYMPTOMS**

1. **Set up a virtual doctor's appointment** as soon as possible so you can potentially access medications for COVID-19. These drugs are most effective when started early. If you do not have a provider, [Dr. B](#) is one online service that can help you get a prescription.
2. During your appointment, ask the provider about the **antiviral drug Paxlovid** which can lower your chances of severe symptoms. Also ask about **Metformin, a common and inexpensive drug** used to treat diabetes that has been [found to reduce risk of Long Covid](#).
3. Make sure there is a **record that you have COVID-19**. This could be [a record of a positive test](#) or notes from your doctor's appointment. If you develop Long COVID, doctors may ask for this record.
4. **Order a pulse oximeter**, which helps keep track of oxygen levels. If your levels fall below 90% and remain there for several minutes, go to the emergency room immediately. Note that these monitors [can be inaccurate](#) for people with darker skin.
5. If you develop any symptoms that feel life-threatening, **go to the ER or call an ambulance**.
6. Start **tracking your rapid tests, symptoms, and oxygen levels** using [this helpful table made by the Clean Air Club](#).

* **REST AND DO FOLLOW-UP MEDICAL TESTING**

Continue to rest after your initial infection clears up, and **get medical testing and support if needed for lingering symptoms or new or worsening health issues**.

* **RESOURCES**

- [Why you should rest- a lot- if you have COVID-19 \(Time\)](#)
- [What To Do if You Have COVID \(Peoples CDC\)](#)
- Paxlovid access: [Find locally](#) | [Cost-saving options](#)
- Record your test results: [Make My Test Count](#)

* **FULL SERIES OF FACTSHEETS WITH LINKED RESOURCES + MORE:**
tiny.cc/LCE or scan the QR code with your phone camera



* **QUESTIONS?** connect@s4hi.org

This series was designed by people living with Long COVID and associated diseases. Each resource sheet has been reviewed by patient and medical experts. This is an informational resource, not medical advice. Publication date: 9/16/2024.