

## COVID-19 Q & A – August 2021

The following guidelines are intended to compliment advice from local Health Departments and or personal physicians. Specific advice provided by your physician or local health department should always be followed.

1. **What should I do if I develop symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, difficulty breathing, runny nose, sore throat, vomiting or diarrhea)?**
  - You should immediately isolate from others if you are able. Stay home in a separate room, use a separate bathroom, avoid contact with other household members, wear a face mask and stay six feet apart when around others.
  - Stay away from people at high risk for severe COVID-19 (i.e. elderly, immunocompromised).
  - Do **NOT** wait for a COVID test result before you isolate. Begin isolation when symptoms appear.
  - Get tested for COVID-19 as soon as possible.  
<https://covid19.memphistn.gov/resources/covid-19-testing-sites-in-shelby-county/>  
[www.shelby.community](http://www.shelby.community)
  - Notify people who were exposed to you (see below for definition of exposure) of your illness counting back two days before the beginning of symptoms. After testing, confirm with them whether or not you have COVID-19.
  - If you do not get tested, you should isolate at home for at least 10 days. To end your isolation, ask the following:
    - Has it been 10 days or more since your symptoms first appeared?
    - Are your symptoms better or ending?
    - Have you been fever free (less than 100.4°F or 38°C or no longer feeling feverish) for at least 24 hours?
  - If you have a condition or take a medication that leads to a weakened immune system then discuss with your physician. You may have to isolate for 20 days (depending on how weak your immune system is) and be fever free for at least one day with improving symptoms.

**2. What should I do if I have a positive test for SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19)?**

- Stay in isolation (away from everyone else) for at least 10 days from the start of your symptoms, OR if you do not have symptoms but have a positive test, isolate 10 days from the date of the positive test.
- You should immediately isolate from others if possible. Stay in a separate room, use a separate bathroom, avoid contact with other household members, wear a face mask and stay six feet apart when around others.
- Notify people who were exposed to you (see below for definition of exposure) of your illness counting back two days before the beginning of symptoms. After testing, confirm with them whether or not you have COVID-19.
- Notify your local Health Department that you have a positive test (call your Health Department's COVID-19 hotline).
- Notify your employer.
- If your children are unvaccinated, notify your children's schools that your children will have to quarantine for 10 days.

**3. How do I know if I have been exposed to someone with COVID-19?**

- If you were within six feet for more than 15 minutes of someone who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 when that person had symptoms OR up to two days before the onset of their symptoms.
- For children in a school setting, they are considered exposed when:
  - Within three feet for more than 15 minutes of a child who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2
  - Within six feet for more than 15 minutes an adult who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2

- Mask wearing does not affect whether you are considered exposed to COVID-19 because masks are often not worn properly. Mask wearing reduces your risk of acquiring COVID-19 and reduces overall spread in the community. It is very important, but it does not prevent you from having to quarantine.
- What you do after you are exposed to COVID-19 depends on whether or not you are vaccinated (see Questions 4 and 5).

**4. What should I do if I have been exposed to someone with a positive test for SARS-CoV-2?**

- If you have not been vaccinated, you should immediately begin your quarantine.
  - Quarantine means that you stay home and keep away from everyone as much as possible. Wear a mask and stay six feet away from others if you have to be around them.
  - Monitor your health and get tested for COVID-19 if you develop any symptoms (see list at the top of the document).
  - If you remain well without symptoms of COVID-19, you need to quarantine for 10 days after your last exposure to the infected person.
    - This time may be shortened to seven days if you have no symptoms of COVID-19 and a negative COVID-19 PCR test on or after day five after your last exposure to the infected person.
- If you are fully vaccinated (two weeks after the second dose of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine or two weeks after a single dose of Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine), you do not need to quarantine.
  - You should make sure to always wear a mask when around others for 14 days after the exposure.
  - You should have a COVID-19 test three to five days after exposure or any time you develop symptoms.
    - If negative continue masking for 14 days total.
    - If positive, begin isolation (as described above) for 10 days from the date of the positive test.

**5. What should I do if I have COVID-19 but I cannot isolate from other members of my household?**

- Stay away from others as much as possible and try to use a separate bathroom.
- Wear a mask as much as possible.
- Do not share personal items with family members.
- The entire household should wash or sanitize their hands thoroughly and frequently.

**6. How long do I quarantine if I have ongoing contact with someone with COVID-19 after my initial exposure (for example, if you or your child have COVID-19 and you cannot stay apart)?**

- You need to quarantine (stay home and away from others) for the 10 days of the infected person's isolation PLUS an additional 10 days of quarantine after your last exposure (at the end of the 10 days for the infected person) for a total of 20 days of quarantine.
- If you are able to stay separate from the infected person then the 10 days of quarantine starts at the time you first isolate from the infected person.
- If there are multiple people in your household who become infected one after the other, you must quarantine for 10 days after your last exposure to the last person who developed infection.
- If you develop infection during your quarantine period (develop symptoms or have a positive test without symptoms) you must isolate for 10 days after the onset of symptoms or the date of the positive test.

**Trusted sites for information:**

<https://www.shelbytnhealth.com/DocumentCenter/View/1996/Guidance-from-the-Health-Officer-Quarantine-and-Isolation>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/quarantine.html>

<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/Isolation-QuarantineRelease.pdf>



<https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/tn/health/documents/cedep/novel-coronavirus/CloseContactGuidance.pdf>

[www.lebonheur.org/coronavirus](http://www.lebonheur.org/coronavirus)

[www.uthsc.edu/coronavirus](http://www.uthsc.edu/coronavirus)