Testing positive to COVID-19 and managing COVID-19 safely at home

If you test positive with a rapid antigen test, you must:

1. Register your positive test on the Service NSW website so you can be linked to important health care support and advice based on your COVID-19 risk. If you or someone in your family can't register online, please call Service NSW on 13 77 88.

If you test positive with a PCR or rapid antigen test, you must:

1. Isolate immediately for 7 days. Your household must also isolate for 7 days. If you have a sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath after 7 days, please remain in isolation until 24 hours after your symptoms have resolved.
2. Tell people who you spent time with from the 2 days before you started having symptoms or 2 days before you tested positive (whichever came first) that you have COVID-19. This includes your social contacts, workplace and/or school.
3. Monitor your symptoms. If you are concerned you should call your GP, the NSW Health COVID-19 Care at Home Support Line on 1800 960 933 or the National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080. If symptoms become severe call 000.

How will I know I have COVID-19?

Most people can now use a rapid antigen test (RAT) result to confirm they are positive for COVID-19.

This includes people with symptoms, people who live with someone who has COVID-19, people who have spent a long time with, or interacted closely with someone who has COVID-19, and people who have travelled internationally within the last 14 days.

Only some people are required to get a confirmatory PCR (nose and throat) swab (see Getting tested for COVID-19).

If you have tested positive for COVID-19 and received a text message from NSW Health, please click on the survey link and answer the questions.

How will my COVID-19 be managed?

When you register your positive RAT result, you will be asked to answer questions that help us determine whether you are at risk of getting severe disease. If you had a positive PCR result, you will be sent the survey by text message. Please reply to the survey as soon as you can.

You will also be sent advice on self-isolation and how to look after your illness at home. If you are at risk of severe disease you will be linked to NSW Health clinical services.

If you are under 65 years of age, have had two doses of COVID-19 vaccine, do not suffer from any chronic health conditions and are not pregnant, you can safely look after yourself at home. Most people with COVID-19 will have a mild illness and will recover in a few days or so, with some people having no symptoms at all.

Most symptoms can be managed with:

- Bed rest
- Regular paracetamol and ibuprofen to relieve pain and fevers
- Throat lozenges for a sore throat
- Keeping hydrated with regular sips of water

Continue to take any medications you have been prescribed as usual. If you are unsure about continuing to take your current medication or treatment, or have any concerns about your health, call your doctor.

Please contact your GP or call the **NSW Health COVID-19 Care at Home Support Line on 1800 960 933** if you are considered to be at high risk of severe disease. People considered at high risk of severe disease include:

- Pregnant women
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people (particularly those with underlying health conditions)
- Pacific Islander people
- Unvaccinated (16 years and over)
- Immunosuppressed

There are effective treatments available for people at risk of severe disease from COVID-19.

If you are pregnant and have COVID-19 see What if I am pregnant and have COVID-19?

If you develop severe symptoms (particularly severe dizziness, drowsy or confused, suffering shortness of breath, chest pressure or pain lasting more than 10 minutes, unable to stand) you should call Triple Zero (000) straight away and tell the ambulance staff that you have been diagnosed with COVID-19.

If you need other clinical support or have non-urgent health related questions during isolation, call the **NSW Health COVID-19 Care at Home Support Line on 1800 960 933**.

What do I need to do?

You and your household contacts must isolate at home

You must self-isolate at home for 7 days from the date you got tested, even if you are fully vaccinated. Self-isolation means staying in your home or accommodation and remaining separated from others. Please see the Self-Isolation Guideline for further information on how to self-isolate and what supports are available to you should you need them.

You must tell people you live with that you have COVID-19. Your household contacts must also self-isolate for 7 days, and have a rapid antigen test (RAT) as soon as possible and again on Day 6 (see Information for people exposed to COVID-19 and Get tested for COVID-19).

The NSW Health Isolation Support Line, is available for practical assistance during self-isolation on 1800 943 553.

Tell your social contacts that you have tested positive

Testing positive to COVID-19 means that you may have spread COVID-19 to others. You may have been infectious from two days before you developed symptoms, or two days before you tested positive if you did not have symptoms.

You should tell any social contacts that you spent time with whilst infectious that you have tested positive. This includes friends and other people you have met socially, such as friends you had dinner with, people you met up with at a pub, club or social function, friends or family who visited your home.

Tell your contacts to assess their risk and next steps using Information for people exposed to COVID-19 and to get a rapid antigen test.

Tell your workplace or school that you have tested positive

You must also tell your work manager or education facility head/relevant staff member that you have tested positive for COVID-19 if you were onsite whilst infectious.

Tell your workplace/school the date of your test, the date you got sick (if you have symptoms), and the days you were at work/school whilst infectious. They should use this information to assess the risk to your fellow workers or students. Your workplace or school may inform them that they have been exposed to COVID-19, and what action they should take.

You can tell your manager by phone or text, or ask a work friend to tell them for you. If you have attended an educational facility, you can call the main phone number for the campus you attend.

What if I am pregnant and have COVID-19?

Pregnant women, who are 14 weeks or more, have a higher risk of complications from COVID-19.

If you test positive to COVID-19 and you are more than 14 weeks pregnant, it is important that you tell your maternity care provider. This may be your GP, midwife, obstetrician or local maternity service.

Most pregnant women will be able to safely stay at home while they have COVID-19. During this time, it is important to:

- Have plenty of fluids, like you would with a regular cold or flu. If you feel unwell, paracetamol can also be taken to help with symptoms. Ibuprofen is not recommended to take while you are pregnant. It is important to mobilise regularly to reduce your risk of developing blood clots.

- It is important to keep a close eye on your baby's movements. Call your maternity care provider immediately **if your baby's movements change** or if you experience:
    o vaginal bleeding
    o abdominal pain
    o constant clear watery vaginal discharge
    o contractions any time before 37 weeks
    o persistent fever
    o headaches
    o sudden swelling of your face and hands
    o you are in labour
    o have any serious concerns about your pregnancy.

- If you have difficulty breathing, develop chest pressure or pain, have severe headaches or dizziness you should call 000 immediately. Ensure that you tell them you have COVID-19 and are pregnant.

- After recovering from COVID-19 it is important to continue your regular antenatal care. If you have missed an antenatal care appointment during your self-isolation, reschedule as soon as possible.

How do I manage a baby or child with COVID-19?

Most children who test positive for COVID-19 can be safely cared for at home by their usual household carers, even if they are not vaccinated. When caring for your child with COVID-19 at home:

- Dress your child in appropriate clothing, so that they are comfortable – not sweating or shivering.
- Give your child plenty of fluids to drink. They may not feel like drinking much so will need your help and encouragement.
- If you are breastfeeding or formula feeding your baby may want more frequent feeds. Breastfeeding is safe to continue if you and/or your baby has COVID-19.
- Encourage them to rest and not overdo it.
- Use paracetamol or ibuprofen, only if you think your child is in pain or appears uncomfortable with a fever. Follow the instructions on the label, and do not give more of these medicines than is recommended in a 24-hour period, as this may be harmful for children.
- Watch your child for signs that their illness is getting worse.

Monitor your child's condition and call your GP or **NSW Health COVID-19 Care at Home Support Line on 1800 960 933** (8:30am to 8:30pm) or the **National Coronavirus Helpline on 1800 020 080** (24/7) if you notice:

- persistent fever (>39°C) which is not responding to treatment
- mild breathlessness
- drinking less than half of what they would normally drink
- urine output less than half of usual volume, and urine dark in colour
- moderate vomiting or diarrhoea
- unable to stand or walk.

If you are concerned that your child is seriously unwell, has difficulty breathing, is severely dehydrated or fainting, please call Triple Zero (000) immediately and inform the operator that your child has COVID-19.

When can I leave self-isolation?

If you have no symptoms at Day 7

You must self-isolate for 7 days from the day you were tested. You can only leave self-isolation after 7 days if you do not have a sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath. If you had a PCR test or you have registered your positive rapid antigen test, you will receive an SMS from NSW Health after 7 days, but you do not have to wait for this SMS to leave self-isolation if it has been 7 days since you were tested. For example, if you were tested at 10am on Tuesday, you can leave isolation at 10am on the following Tuesday if you do not have any of these symptoms. You do not need to test before leaving self-isolation in NSW.

Wear a mask when near to or talking to other people and avoid visiting high risk settings (health care, aged care, disability care or correctional facilities) for a further 3 days. If you work in one of these settings speak to your employer before returning. If you have a severely weakened immune system (such as you are a transplant recipient or are receiving chemotherapy) you should take these additional precautions for a further 4 days (a total of 7 days following release from isolation).

If you have symptoms at Day 7

If you have a sore throat, runny nose, cough or shortness of breath in the last 24 hours of your isolation, please remain in isolation until 24 hours after your symptoms have resolved. If you are concerned, call your GP.

Wear a mask when near to or talking to other people and avoid visiting high risk settings (health care, aged care, disability care or correctional facilities) for a further 3 days after you leave isolation. If you work in one of these settings speak to your employer before returning. If you have a severely weakened immune system (such as you are a transplant recipient or are receiving chemotherapy) you should take these additional precautions for a further 4 days (a total of 7 days following release from isolation).
If you have other symptoms after 7 days (eg fever, headaches) which are not getting better you can leave isolation but you should contact your GP.

If you are under the care of a clinical team, your team will tell you when you will be released from isolation.

What if I am exposed to someone with COVID-19 again?

People who have recovered from COVID-19 have a low risk of getting it again in the 28 days after you are released as most people develop some immunity (ability to fight the disease).

If you come into contact with someone with COVID-19 within 28 days after you are released, you will generally not need to self-isolate or get a test unless you have symptoms. If you come into contact with someone with COVID-19 more than 28 days after you are released, you will need to self-isolate, test and follow the advice in the [Information for people exposed to COVID-19](#) and [Get tested for COVID-19](#) factsheets.

However, if you have been released from isolation before other positive cases in your household, you will not need to self-isolate or test unless you develop new COVID-19 symptoms.

How soon should I get vaccinated?

For further information, see the [COVID-19 vaccines: Frequently asked questions.](#)

What support is available while I am in self-isolation?

Mental health support

- NSW Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511
- Beyond Blue helpline – 1800 512 348
- Lifeline – 13 11 14
- Service NSW [mental wellbeing resources](#)

Domestic violence support

- National sexual assault and domestic violence helpline on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

NSW Health has partnered with [Sonder](#) which provides a personal wellbeing service with 24/7 access to multilingual chat and phone access to a range of mental health, medical and wellbeing support services.