COVID-19 Recommendations for the General Public

Updated 3/4/2024 with revised links to CDC webpages.

The Tennessee Department of Health recommends the following steps for people who test positive for COVID-19 or have been exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19. These recommendations are NOT for healthcare personnel or settings.

Recommendations for people who test positive for COVID-19

1. **If you have COVID-19 symptoms, stay home** until you have not had a fever for 24 hours without using fever reducing medication AND other COVID-19 symptoms are mild and improving.
    o If you do not have symptoms, you should follow the recommendations below (#2 and #3) to reduce exposure to others.
2. **Avoid contact with people at higher-risk for severe COVID-19 for 10 days*.** Higher-risk individuals include older adults, those who live in congregate care facilities, and those who have certain medical conditions or circumstances that put them at higher risk for serious illness.
3. **Mask** when you are around other people indoors for the 10 days* after you became sick or tested positive (if no symptoms). You may remove your mask sooner than 10 days if you have two sequential negative antigen tests at least one day apart.

*The potential infectious period is 2 days before the date symptoms began (or the positive test date if no symptoms) through 10 days after symptoms began. (Day 0 is the symptom onset date or positive test date).

Recommendations for people who were exposed to COVID-19

- **If you have new COVID-19 symptoms,** you should test and mask right away.
- **If you do not have symptoms,** and are at higher risk of severe COVID-19 infection and would benefit from treatment, you should test within 5 days.
- **If you do not have symptoms** and have contact with people who are at higher risk for severe infection, you should mask indoors when around higher-risk people for 10 days. Consider testing within 5 days after the last exposure date and before contact with higher-risk people.

Healthcare Settings

- Healthcare personnel working in healthcare settings should follow: CDC Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2
- Healthcare facilities should follow and CDC COVID-19 Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations

February 29, 2024