

## **I Have Tested Positive for COVID-19, Now What?**

*This information is reflective of CDC guidelines dated 1/4/2022.*

*Recommendations may change as new information or guidance is presented.*

### **How long should I isolate/quarantine if I test positive?**

- **POSITIVE TEST, WITHOUT SYMPTOMS**

Stay home and isolate from others for 5 days. Day 0 is the day you took the test. On day 6, if you continue to have no symptoms, you can leave isolation.

- It is very important to still wear a well-fitting mask on days 6-10 to avoid getting others sick because you could still be contagious.
- Avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings, until after at least 10 days.
- Avoid travel until a full 10 days after the day of your test. If you must travel, wear a well-fitting mask.
- Avoid going to places where you are unable to wear a mask, like restaurants and gyms, until a full 10 days after the day of your test.
- If at any point you develop symptoms, your 5-day isolation period starts over. Follow the directions below for those who test positive, with symptoms.

- **POSITIVE TEST, WITH SYMPTOMS**

Stay home and isolate from others for 5 days. Day 0 is the first day you started to have symptoms.

- It can be hard to isolate from others in your household. Try to use a separate bedroom/bathroom if possible. If not possible, sanitize frequently touched surfaces often, use separate towels, and wash dishes/utensils well after use. Having a filter at home to ventilate the air is also helpful, since it is not ideal to open windows in winter.

- If everyone in the same household is sick with Covid or tested positive, there is no need to isolate from each other.
- If you still have a fever or your respiratory symptoms are not improving by day 6, do not leave quarantine. Please stay home until the fever is gone and other symptoms begin to resolve.
- If you are fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications AND your symptoms are resolving, you can leave quarantine on day 6.
  - It is very important to still wear a well-fitting mask on days 6-10 to avoid getting others sick because you could still be contagious.
  - Avoid people who are immunocompromised or at high risk for severe disease, and nursing homes and other high-risk settings, until after at least 10 days.
  - Avoid travel until a full 10 days after the start of your symptoms. If you must travel, wear a well-fitting mask.
  - Avoid going to places where you are unable to wear a mask, like restaurants and gyms, until a full 10 days after the start of your symptoms.
  - It is at this time (fever-free and day 5 or 6) that you may do a rapid test. -If it is negative, you can leave isolation, but continue to wear a mask and follow the above measures to avoid getting others sick.  
-If it is positive, stay in isolation through day 10.

**What can I expect during my illness? How should I be prepared?**

- Most symptoms are mild and involve cough, sore throat, muscle aches, and low-grade fever. You may have sneezing, nasal congestion, and headaches as well. If you are unvaccinated or haven't had Covid before, it is possible your symptoms will be worse. For example, a fever of 102 to 103 for 3-4 days is common.
- Make sure you have a working thermometer at home.

- It is helpful to have a pulse oximeter as well. These can be purchased online, in stores, or you can get an order from your doctor to obtain one through Alick's, to be billed to your insurance. Someone without Covid and not in isolation will need to go to Alick's to pick it up after it is ordered.
- An oxygen level above 92% is ideal. If you have levels that are below 90%, it is important to communicate that to your doctor.
- Acetaminophen (Tylenol) can help relieve muscle aches and fever. Cold medications with an expectorant (such as guaifenesin/Mucinex) can help loosen congestion. These medications help relieve symptoms, they do not make you better faster.
- Consult your doctor or pharmacist before taking them, follow the dosage recommendations on the label, and make sure they don't interfere with any other medications you might be taking.
- It is important to avoid dehydration. Water, diluted juices, and electrolyte fluids like Gatorade can keep you hydrated. A few sips every 30 minutes does the job.

#### **What are the therapies for Covid? Am I eligible?**

- There are monoclonal antibody infusions that we use to treat high-risk patients and there are eligibility criteria that your doctor must follow to order them. Some are useful against the Delta variant, but they are not effective against the Omicron variant. We don't know the precise breakdown of Delta vs Omicron in our area, but it is likely that Omicron has now surpassed Delta infections. The antibody infusion for Omicron, called Sotrovimab, is in very short supply and is reserved for those who are at highest risk of complications from Covid infection. Your doctor will be able to tell you if you are eligible for this treatment.
- There is a Pfizer oral medication called Paxlovid that is only available for hospitalized patients at this time.

- There is a Merck oral medication called Molnupiravir that is available in limited supply for certain patients. Your doctor will be able to tell you if you are eligible for this treatment.