

What to do if you test positive

Adapted in 2023 by Accessible Formats Service,
Blind Low Vision NZ, Auckland

TN: There are two logos at the top of the page. On the left is: Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa New Zealand Government. On the right is: Te Whatu Ora Health New Zealand.

What to do if you test positive

Report your test result

If you have taken a rapid antigen test (RAT), report your positive result online or by calling the helpline.

Online: To report your RAT result, go here:

www.MyCovidRecord.nz

(The information on the link above may not be available in alternate formats).

Call: 0800 222 478

Te Whatu Ora—Health New Zealand will then send you a text message from the official 2328 or 2648 numbers to confirm your positive result. This has information about recommended isolation and other useful advice.

If you had a PCR test, you will get a text message with your result.

If your employer asks to see proof that you are isolating, you can use this text message. You do not need a medical certificate from a doctor.

Start your recommended 5 day isolation period

If you test positive for COVID-19, it is recommended you isolate for at least 5 days, even if you only have mild symptoms, starting at Day 0. This includes if you have had COVID-19 before.

Day 0 is the day your symptoms started or when you tested positive, whichever came first.

Isolation means not going to work or school.

Your Household Contacts do not need to isolate.

For people travelling or holidaying around New Zealand, Household Contacts include people who share non-communal holiday accommodation such as a hotel room, tent, campervan, or temporary holiday home such as a bach or AirBNB.

What to do during your recommended isolation period

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, we recommend you isolate for 5 days, even if you only have mild symptoms, starting at Day 0.

Day 0 is the day your symptoms started or when you tested positive, whichever came first. This means you should not go to work or school.

If you do need to leave your home during your 5 day recommended isolation period, it is very important you take precautions to prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.

You should wear a mask whenever you leave the house.

You should not:

- visit a healthcare facility (except to access medical care)
- visit an aged residential care facility

- have contact with anyone at risk of getting seriously unwell with COVID-19.

You should discuss your return to work with your employer or your child's return to school with their school principal. Your employer or your school may require additional precautions.

Ventilation

Open windows to increase fresh air flow inside. The risk of spreading COVID-19 is highest in crowded and poorly ventilated indoor spaces.

Exercise

You can exercise outside your home while isolating. You can exercise in your neighbourhood, but not using any shared facility, such as a swimming pool or gym. You cannot exercise with other people unless they are part of your household.

Remember to:

- keep your distance from others
- stick to gentle, familiar exercise—do not do anything risky where you may need rescuing
- carry a face mask—you do not need to wear a face mask, but you may feel more comfortable doing so.

If you get COVID-19 while travelling

If you are away from home or your normal place of residence, you can return home in a private vehicle.

If you live in an apartment or multi-unit dwelling

If you live in an apartment or multi-unit dwelling, you should follow the same isolation advice on this page:

- wear a mask in communal areas if you need to leave your apartment, for example, using a shared laundry
- physically distance from others in the apartment building
- not use the lift with anyone else
- not use shared areas such as gyms, pools or saunas while you are isolating.

You can use your balcony, and we encourage you to have the doors open to allow air circulation into the unit.

However, be mindful of whether other people are out on their balconies and do not use your balcony if others use theirs.

In case of emergency, you should follow normal evacuation protocols—have a mask by your door ready to go in case.

Isolating with tamariki (children)

There are some simple ways to help reduce risk of COVID-19 spreading when isolating with your tamariki.

If you have COVID-19 but your children do not, or vice versa you should:

- reduce your contact with them where you can reduce your contact with them where you can

- sleep in a separate room from your child if possible
- avoid contact with other people in your home where possible
- wear face masks when in the same room as others
- open windows for ventilation.

We understand some of these may not be possible, particularly with young children. Face masks and ventilation are particularly important to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Household contacts

If you, or a household member, test positive for COVID-19, other people living with you are also at higher risk of becoming infected.

You are considered to be a household contact if you live with, or have spent at least 1 night or day (more than 8 hours) with someone who has COVID-19. Household contacts should test daily for 5 days using a RAT.

Test for 5 days

If someone you live with tests positive for COVID-19, you do not need to isolate.

We recommend all household contacts continue to test with a RAT from the day the person with COVID-19 tests positive.

If any of your tests are positive, we recommend you isolate for 5 days.

If you cannot test daily, we recommend you stay home for 5 days.

Avoid the person with COVID-19

You should avoid or minimise contact with the person who has COVID-19 during their isolation period.

Wear a face mask

We recommend you wear a face mask if you leave your home during your 5 days of testing, to help reduce the risk of infecting others. Wearing a face mask is important when:

- visiting vulnerable people, such as older people and those who are immunocompromised
- using public transport
- in a crowded indoor space.

Monitor for symptoms for 10 days

Monitor for symptoms for 10 days from when the first person in your house tests positive.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms at any time, test and stay home until 24 hours after your symptoms resolve. If you test positive, you need to isolate for 7 days.

Finish your recommended isolation period

After completing your 5 days of recommended isolation, if your symptoms have resolved and you feel well, you can return to your normal activities.

You may receive a text message confirming your isolation period has ended. You do not need to wait for an official message to leave isolation.

You do not need a negative RAT result to return to work or school. But, you should discuss your return to work with your employer or school principal. Your employer or school may require additional precautions.

If you are still sick

Some people can still be infectious after 5 days. If you are still unwell after you have completed 5 days of recommended isolation, we recommend you stay home until you are recovered.

If you do need to leave the house, we recommend you wear a mask and do not:

- visit a healthcare facility (other than to seek medical attention)
- visit an aged residential care facility
- have contact with anyone at risk of getting seriously unwell with COVID-19.

If you need support

- The COVID-19 disability helpline can provide help or information about vaccines, face mask exemptions, testing, managing COVID-19, and any other health concerns you may have.

- Call 0800 11 12 13 for free. If you are unable to call, you can text 8988.
- The COVID-19 welfare phone line can help if you are self-isolating and need food or other essential items. Call 0800 512 337.
- You can also call Healthline for free for advice on 0800 358 5453.

End of What to do if you test positive