

# COVID-19

## Guidance for persons who have been exposed to COVID-19

If you have been exposed to someone who has COVID-19, caused by the SARS-CoV2 virus, you may become infected with the virus. For your safety and the safety of others, DHEC recommends you follow the guidance below.

### After being exposed to COVID-19

**Start taking precautions immediately:**

**Wear a mask as soon as you find out you were exposed.**

**Get tested at Day 6, even if you do not develop symptoms**

- Day 0 is the day of your last exposure to someone with COVID-19
- Day 1 is the first full day after your last exposure

**Continue precautions 10 full days.**

*If you develop symptoms at any time, get tested and isolate until you know the result.*

You can still develop COVID-19 up to 10 days after you have been exposed.

### COVID-19 Precautions

1. Wear a high-quality mask or respirator (e.g., N95) any time you are around others inside your home or indoors in public.
2. Do not go places where you are unable to wear a mask.
3. Take extra precautions if you will be around people who are more likely to get very sick from COVID-19.
  - Wear a mask or respirator
  - Improve ventilation
    - Open windows
    - Change AC filters frequently
    - Use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaners
    - Turn thermostats to “ON” position instead of “AUTO” for continuous airflow and filtration
    - Turn on exhaust fans
  - Move indoor activities outdoors
  - Get tested if needed
  - Increase space and distance between people

### Watch for Symptoms

- Fever (100.4° F or greater) or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

*If you develop symptoms at any time, get tested and isolate until you know the result.*

### If you begin to feel ill at any time with fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID-19

- Immediately self-isolate and avoid contact with others.
- Seek testing for COVID-19.
- Seek medical care, if needed.
  - Call ahead before you go to a doctor's office or emergency room and tell them about your possible exposure to COVID-19 and your symptoms.
  - Avoid contact with others when you arrive.
  - Several South Carolina health systems are offering telehealth screening options to the public.
- Visit [scdhec.gov/covid19](https://scdhec.gov/covid19) for more details.

### What is the difference between Flu and COVID-19?

Influenza (Flu) and COVID-19 are both contagious respiratory illnesses, but they are caused by different viruses. COVID-19 is caused by infection with a coronavirus first identified in 2019, and flu is caused by infection with influenza viruses. For more details, visit [cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm](https://cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm)