

COVID ISOLATION FAQs

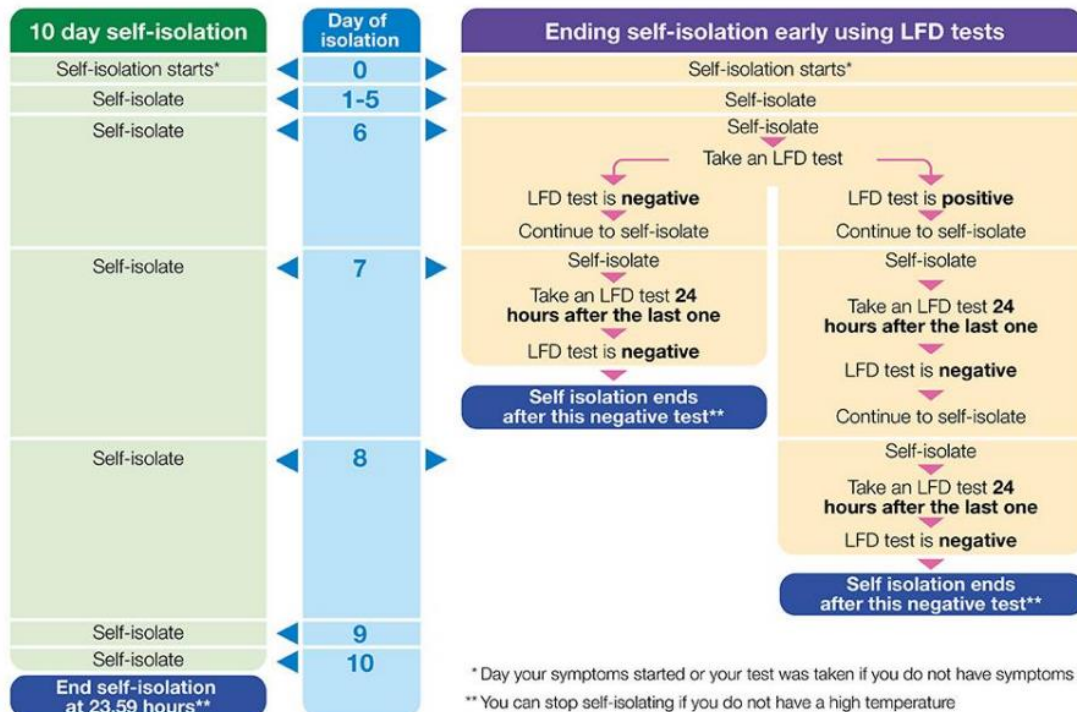
People with COVID

Anyone who has symptoms of COVID-19 should stay at home, self-isolate immediately and order a PCR test. In England, if you do the PCR test within 2 days of a positive rapid lateral flow test at a test site and your PCR is negative, you can stop self-isolating.

You must self-isolate as soon as symptoms develop, or when you receive a positive test result (LFD or PCR) if you do not have symptoms. Day 0 is the day you began your symptoms or received your positive LFD or PCR test result (whichever was earlier); your self-isolation period runs for 10 full days after Day 0. However, new guidance means you may be able to end your self-isolation after 7 days, rather than the full 10-day period.

To come out of self-isolation after 7 days, two negative lateral flow tests (LFT) are required: the first no earlier than day six, followed by a second negative test result 24 hours later. If both tests are negative - and you do not have a high temperature - you can stop self-isolating immediately (on day seven). If the day six test is positive, further tests can be taken on subsequent days, always adhering to the same criteria - that you must receive two negative tests, 24 hours apart, to end self-isolation.

Examples of when to end self-isolation if you have had COVID-19 symptoms or have received a positive COVID-19 test result



If you are isolating because of a positive test result but did not have any symptoms, and you develop COVID-19 symptoms within your isolation period, start a new isolation period from the day your symptoms start.

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms at any point after ending your first period of isolation you and your household should follow the self-isolation steps again.

If you have a negative COVID-19 PCR test result after being tested because you had symptoms

If your PCR test result is **negative** but you still have symptoms, you may have another viral illness such as a cold, flu, or stomach bug. You should stay at home until you feel well and for at least 2 more days if you have had diarrhoea or vomiting. Seek medical attention if you are concerned about your symptoms.

If your PCR test result is **negative**, you can stop isolating unless you have been advised by NHS Test and Trace that you are legally required to self-isolate. Anyone in your household who isolated because of your symptoms can also stop isolating.

Close Contacts

Exemptions

If you do not have symptoms of COVID-19 and live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, you are legally required to self-isolate unless you meet any of the following conditions:

- you are fully vaccinated. Fully vaccinated means you have had 2 doses of an approved vaccine such as Pfizer BioNTech, AstraZeneca, or Spikevax (formerly Moderna). You are also fully vaccinated if you have had one dose of the single-dose Janssen vaccine
- you are below 18 years 6 months
- you have taken part in or are currently part of an approved COVID-19 vaccine trial
- you are not able to get vaccinated for medical reasons



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Contacts who are not legally required to self-isolate

If you meet any of the four conditions listed above (and are therefore not legally required to self-isolate), follow the [guidance for contacts who are not legally required to self-isolate](#)

You are strongly advised to:

- take an LFD test every day for 7 days, or until 10 days since your last contact with the person who tested positive for COVID-19 if this is earlier
- take this daily test before you leave the household for the first time that day

If you have been informed by NHS Test and Trace that you are a contact of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 but they have not been able to tell you the date you had contact with this person, you should take an LFD test every day for 7 days.

If you take an LFD test and the result is positive, you should immediately self-isolate to prevent yourself from passing the infection on to other people. You should arrange to have a PCR test. If this PCR test result is positive, you must start a new self-isolation period, starting from the date the PCR test was taken. If this PCR test result is negative, you can stop self-isolating but you should continue to take your daily LFD tests.

Unvaccinated

For any person over the age of 18 years and 6 months, who is not double-jabbed and is the close contact with a positive case they must isolate for the full 10 days immediately. Follow separate [guidance for contacts of people with possible or confirmed coronavirus Covid-19 infection who does not live with the person.](#)

I have had COVID in the last 90 days. Should I be using LFD/PCR tests?

Updated government guidance advises that even if someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, they are strongly encouraged to take part in LFD testing on-site or at home once they have completed their isolation period for their prior infection. A PCR test should always be sought if symptomatic.

