

If you have COVID-19

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora will continue to provide **free** rapid antigen tests (RATs) to healthcare providers and the public until 30 June 2024.

If you have COVID-19 we recommend you isolate for at least 5 days, even if you only have mild symptoms.

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.

If you are a Household Contact of someone who has COVID-19, we recommend you do a RAT each day for 5 days. You are a Household Contact if:

- you normally live in a house or flat on a permanent or part-time basis, for example, shared custody, with a person who has tested positive, and
- you spent at least 1 night or day (more than 8 hours) in that residence while the person was infectious.

You are also a Household Contact if you do not normally share a residence with the person who has COVID-19, but spent a night together in the same room.

What to do during your recommended isolation period

You should stay at home and avoid contact with other people in your household. If you need to go out during your recommended isolation, we recommend you wear a face mask.

Report your test result

If you have taken a rapid antigen test (RAT), report your positive result online or by calling the helpline. **Online:** [My Covid Record\(external link\)](#) or **Call:** [0800 222 478](tel:0800222478)

Te Whatu Ora — Health New Zealand will then send you a text message to confirm your positive 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.

Monitor and manage your symptoms

Most people with COVID-19 — especially if they are fully vaccinated and boosted — are likely to have a mild to moderate illness and will be fine to recover at home.

Symptoms for COVID-19 tend to show 2 to 5 days after a person has been infected but can take up to 14 days.

If you need advice or If it is an emergency

If you need advice on how to treat your symptoms or have worsening symptoms, talk to your healthcare provider or call the COVID-19 Healthline on [0800 358 5453](tel:08003585453).

If you or the person you are caring for develops difficulty breathing, severe chest pain, fainting or becomes unconscious, call **111** immediately.

COVID-19 healthcare is free for eligible people

If you are eligible, you do not need to pay for COVID-19-related medical costs or healthcare when you get COVID-19. If you develop long COVID and need further appointments, you will need to pay for your visits to your doctor as you normally would. This includes prescription dispensing fees.

Eligible people include:

- people with certain high-risk medical conditions
- Māori
- Pacific peoples
- some disabled people
- those aged 65 and over
- anyone else that meets the criteria for access to antiviral medicines
- refugees and asylum seekers
- people experiencing homelessness or who are in transitional housing

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 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

<https://covid19.govt.nz/testing-and-isolation/if-you-have-covid-19/>