COVID-19 Patient Exposure

You were potentially exposed to someone with the virus during your hospital stay. The following information provides you instructions on what you should do to help stop COVID-19 from spreading to others if you become sick.

**If I was in close contact to someone with COVID-19, do I need to stay home from work or school?**

The need for quarantine after a high-risk exposure to a person with COVID-19 depends if you are up to date on your vaccinations or if you have had confirmed COVID-19 with a positive test in the last 90 days.

Up to date on your vaccination means:

- in the last 5 months, you have received 2 doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccines OR
- in the last 2 months, you have received the Johnson & Johnson’s Janssen vaccine OR
- you are age 12 and older and have received a booster dose

If you have had a high-risk exposure to a person with COVID-19 and you are up to date on your vaccinations or if you have had confirmed COVID-19 with a positive test in the last 90 days, you do not need to quarantine. However, you should:

- monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and if symptoms occur, you should immediately isolate and test for COVID-19
- social distance
- wear a mask when indoors in public for 10 days after exposure (day of last exposure is day 0)
- if possible, obtain a COVID-19 test on or around day 5 of quarantine (exception: testing not needed if you have had COVID-19 in the last 90 days)

If you have had a high-risk exposure to a person with COVID-19 and you are not up to date on your vaccinations, you should:

- **quarantine** for a full 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days
- wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for a full 10 days after exposure (day of last exposure is day 0).
- if possible, obtain a COVID-19 test on or around day 5 of quarantine
- monitor for symptoms and if symptoms occur, you should immediately isolate and test for COVID-19

If you have tested positive for COVID-19, follow these steps to not spread it to others.

**Isolate:**

If you test positive for COVID-19 you need to isolate at home for at least five full days from the onset of symptoms, even if you are vaccinated. You should not leave your home except to receive urgent medical care. The day your symptoms start is day zero.

If you don’t have any COVID-19 symptoms, you need to isolate for five days from the day of your positive test result. The day your positive COVID-19 test is collected is day zero.

If you are initially without symptoms, but then develop symptoms at any time during your isolation, you should start your isolation over. The day you develop symptoms then becomes day zero.
Home isolation can end at the end of day five if you are:

- Fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication **AND**
- Your symptoms have greatly improved if you initially had symptoms **AND**
- No symptoms have developed if you were initially symptom free

If you have a routine appointment at UI Hospitals & Clinics or are visiting a patient, you need to complete the full 10-day isolation before coming to our facilities. If you have an urgent medical need, please notify your provider you are COVID-19 positive before your appointment.

After home isolation ends, you should continue to wear a mask for an additional 5 days (days 6-10).

If you are unable to wear a mask when around others, you should continue to isolate for 10 days. 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.

Do not travel during your 5-day isolation period. After you end isolation, avoid travel until a full 10 days after your first day of symptoms. If you must travel on days 6-10, wear a well-fitting mask when you are around others for the entire duration of travel. If you are unable to wear a mask, you should not travel during the 10 days.

Do not go to places where you are unable to wear a mask, such as restaurants and some gyms, and avoid eating around others at home and at work until a full 10 days after your first day of symptoms or your positive test result if you don't have symptoms.

**What should I do if someone I am in close contact with has symptoms of COVID-19 but hasn't been tested yet?**

When someone has COVID-19, they are contagious even before they develop symptoms. If you have close contact with someone who has symptoms but hasn’t yet been tested, you could already be infected. If at all possible, start quarantining yourself at home, if recommended above, until your contact gets their test results. If their test is positive or if a provider tells them that they have COVID-19, continue to quarantine. If their test is negative, return to your normal routine.

**Watch your symptoms**

Call **319-384-9010** or use the MyChart self-checker for next steps if you develop symptoms and they are getting worse.

Get help right away if your illness is getting much worse, such as having trouble breathing.

Call **911** if you are having an emergency.