

My COVID test was positive

Now what?

And other COVID FAQs



Follow the isolation guidelines below and stay home except to get medical care.

We strongly recommend you wear a disposable surgical or KN95 mask when around others until your symptoms have fully resolved or until 14 days from the start of your symptoms (CDC says 10 days; we prefer a more conservative approach given the minimal harm with mask wearing). See the end of the document for quarantine recommendations after exposure.

Isolate for five days starting from Day 1 of your symptoms

or on the day of your positive test following exposure if you are asymptomatic. This means staying at home and being completely away from others THE ENTIRE TIME, ideally in a separate living area from other family members.

After your initial five days are over, you can be around others if:

- Your symptoms are mostly resolved including no fever (100.6) for more than 24 hours without medication (Tylenol/acetaminophen, Ibuprofen, Motrin, Aleve or cold medication with these).
- You have a negative rapid antigen/home test (we do not do repeat testing in our office for this indication, but you may purchase this over the counter).
- Wear a surgical or KN95 mask until at least day 10, ideally day 14, to help further limit spread in the event you are still contagious.

How to assess your respiratory illness at home:

- Monitor your symptoms carefully as well as your oxygen saturation with a pulse oximeter. This can be purchased on Amazon or at a local pharmacy.
- Check your oxygen level and heart rate every six to eight hours while you are awake. If you live alone, designate someone to call you daily and review your symptoms and vitals.
- Call 911 immediately if you have difficulty breathing; severe chest pain; new confusion; pale, gray or blue colored skin tone; oxygen saturation less than 85%; or inability to wake or stay awake.
- Go to the emergency department if you are experiencing shortness of breath, oxygen saturation less than 90%, confusion, excessive sleepiness, or a heart rate of less than 120, or if you are unable to keep down food, liquids or medications.
- Call our office if your oxygen saturation is less than CORRECT? 92%, you have a productive cough, or you have persistent fever of more than 101.0 for more than 24 hours, including fever of more than 101.0 with fever-reducing medication.
- ***Do not delay seeking care if your health is worsening. Call if you are concerned or have questions!***

How to manage your viral respiratory illness at home:

Get plenty of rest and stay well hydrated.

- Move around for five to 10 minutes every hour when not sleeping to improve circulation.
- Consume a high-calorie, high-protein diet. Add Boost or Ensure supplements if needed.
- Drink five to eight eight-ounce cups of water/Gatorade daily plus two additional cups of water/Gatorade if you have diarrhea or fever.
- Drink a half cup to one cup of water every hour you are awake.
- Signs of dehydration include dark yellow urine, dry mouth or skin, excessive thirst, headache, poor concentration, and urination less than four times per day.
- Wash your hands as much as possible. Cover your cough. Sleep in a separate bedroom, and use a separate bathroom if able. Clean all touched surfaces thoroughly. Wear a surgical mask or KN95 if you must be around other family members in your house that are not positive or symptomatic.

To manage your fever, headache or body aches:

- Alternate between 500 and 1,000 mg acetaminophen and 600-800 mg ibuprofen/Motrin every four hours. Do not exceed more than 3,000 mg acetaminophen in 24 hours, or 2,400 mg ibuprofen in 24 hours.

To manage your nasal congestion and drainage:

- Take one to two tablets of 600 mg Mucinex every 12 hours with adequate water. Use Flonase/Nasocort: one spray each nostril twice daily. You may use Afrin nasal decongestant, one spray in each nostril every six hours for no more than five days. Use Sudafed as directed if you do not have high blood pressure or a heart condition. Consider an antihistamine such as loratadine or Benadryl as directed or Coricidin HBP if you do have high blood pressure.

To manage your cough:

- Use Mucinex DM or any combination of guaifenesin or dextromethorphan; other options include Delsym, Robitussin, or Coricidin HPB (avoid decongestants such as phenylephrine if you have HBP or a heart condition).
- Ask your doctor/NP about prescription cough medication. Your cough may persist for two to four weeks after your illness has resolved.

Do you need antibiotics?

- Antibiotics are not helpful for viral infections. Persistent fever of more than 101, productive cough, initial improvement followed by worsening, loss of appetite and severe fatigue may be symptoms of pneumonia or bacterial sinus infection—these are reasons to call our office as above.

What **NOT** to take:

- Please do not take Ivermectin or hydroxychloroquine as these are not effective and may be harmful.

Are supplements helpful?

- None are proven to be effective at this point, including vitamin C, zinc and vitamin D; however, these are unlikely to be harmful to you.

Quarantine guidelines after exposure:

If you are unvaccinated or more than six months out from your booster (Pfizer/Moderna/Johnson & Johnson):

- If feasible, quarantine for five days at home, followed by mask wearing for five days for a total of 10 days.
- If you are an essential worker, use strict masking only for 10 days following exposure.
- Take a COVID test (rapid or PCR) on Day 5 after exposure or sooner if symptoms develop.
- If positive, follow the isolation guidelines above (Day 1 starts over from the first day of symptoms or a positive test).

If you received a booster (third dose of Pfizer/Moderna or second dose of Johnson & Johnson):

- Strictly mask only for 10 days following exposure.
- Take a COVID test (rapid or PCR) on Day 5 after exposure or sooner if symptoms develop.

COVID FAQ:

When can I receive the COVID vaccine or a booster after I have tested positive for COVID-19?

- You are eligible to receive the vaccine or booster after you have fully recovered from your illness. We recommend discussing optimal timing with your doctor or nurse practitioner.

When can I receive the COVID vaccine or booster after I received a monoclonal antibody infusion (MAB)?

- You need to wait 90 days after MAB infusion to get the vaccine. You may receive the Flu, Shingrix, or pneumonia vaccines during this window.

How do I obtain Malnupravir or Paxlovid?

- You need a positive test result and a prescription from a doctor/NP/PA. Unfortunately, right now, these medications are in extremely limited supply. We will let you know when they are available and how to obtain them. They will be reserved for very high-risk individuals initially.

- Paxlovid is currently available through IU-BMH via prescription only for anyone with a positive covid test at least one risk factor for severe covid-19, regardless of vaccination status. In clinical trials, it was 89% effective at preventing hospitalization and it also shortened the duration of symptoms.

How do I receive a monoclonal antibody infusion if I have a positive test?

- Please discuss with your healthcare team if this is a good option for you and how to obtain one due to limited availability, the short window in which to receive it and inclusion criteria.

Should I "mix and match" my vaccines?

- This is a commonly asked question that may vary based on the individual, and we recommend discussing this with your healthcare team.

Where can I obtain the most recent updates on COVID-19 vaccines, testing and treatment?

- Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/InternistsAssociated/

Where else can I find reliable sources of COVID-19-related information?

- www.facebook.com/hoosiercovid
- yourlocalepidemiologist.substack.com/
- www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html
- www.coronavirus.in.gov/

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

- Quarantine is what you need to do after EXPOSURE to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.
- Isolation is what you need to do if you have SYMPTOMS after being exposed and/or are undergoing testing to confirm if you have the virus.

Please call your healthcare team at Internists Associated or message us on the Patient Portal with any questions you have after reading this document thoroughly. We continue to offer walk-in Moderna and Pfizer vaccinations in the office as well as virtual video and phone visits.