

Quarantine or Isolation: What's the difference?



Quarantine

- Recommended for those who have had a known or suspected exposure to a contagious disease (like COVID).
- You should stay home, away from other people, except for medical care or basic necessities. If you must take care of a family member, they may have to quarantine as well.
- Lasts for 14 days — this allows enough time to develop an infection from exposure.
- Sometimes you may be requested to test during this time, BUT a negative test at any point does not end your quarantine sooner.

Isolation

- Recommended for those who have a suspected COVID infection or a first positive test for COVID.
- You should stay home, away from other people, except for medical care or basic necessities. If a family member must take care of you, they will need to quarantine after you are well (or after their last exposure to you while you are on isolation).
- Lasts for at least 10 days.
- The 10 days start with your first symptom or positive test (if asymptomatic).
- This means that if you become sick while on quarantine, your 10 days starts at that time—not at the beginning of quarantine.
- If you are improving and have no fever at the end of 10 days, you can stop your isolation.
- Repeat testing is not recommended.