

COVID-19 casual contact

Fact sheet for casual contacts



- A casual contact is someone who has been near a person with infectious COVID-19 but who is at lower risk of getting COVID-19 than a close contact.
- There are two ways to know if you are a casual contact:
- NSW Health will send you a text or phone you.
- You have checked the [COVID-19 case locations and venues of concern](#) and you have been at one of the casual contact places at the listed time.
- All casual contacts need to get tested and isolate immediately.
- This factsheet has been translated into various community languages, see [translated resources](#).

Do I need to self-isolate and get tested?

Yes. Everyone who is a casual contact must get a test and isolate until they get a negative result.

Please follow the advice you get from NSW Health.

If you were at the casual contact place less than 4 days ago:

- get a COVID-19 test [at your closest testing location](#), and isolate
- **get another COVID-19 test on day 5** after you were at the casual contact place
- you can stop isolating when you get a negative result from your first test – but please:
 - wear a mask when in the same room as any other person
 - do not leave your home except if this is necessary, or to exercise outdoors
 - go to work only if this is essential for your workplace.
- monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and get tested again at any time if you develop any symptoms. You will need to isolate until you receive a negative test result.

If you were at the casual contact place 4 or more days ago:

- get a COVID-19 test [at your closest testing location](#), and isolate
- stay in isolation until you receive a negative test result
- monitor for [COVID-19 symptoms](#) and get tested again at any time if you develop any symptoms. You will need to isolate until you receive a negative test result.

Please note: You must not leave your home to get a COVID-19 vaccination when you are isolating. Once you have received a negative result, you can attend a vaccination centre.

What does isolation mean?

Isolation means you must stay at your home or accommodation, and stay apart from other people at all times. You cannot leave your home or accommodation, unless for medical care (including a COVID-19 test), or in an emergency. You must not allow other people into your home or accommodation unless they usually live there, or they are entering for medical or emergency purposes.

Isolation is different from stay-at-home directions. When you isolate, you are **not** allowed to leave the house for outdoor exercise, shopping, work or education. Other members of your household do not need to isolate during this period.

Please read the [NSW Health Self-Isolation Guideline](#) for further information.

Do I monitor for symptoms?

All casual contacts should monitor for [symptoms](#) for at least 14 days after you were at the casual contact place. Symptoms to look out for include:

- fever or history of fever (night sweats, chills)
- cough
- sore throat
- shortness of breath (difficulty breathing).
- runny nose
- loss of taste
- loss of smell
- muscle aches

Other reported symptoms of COVID-19 include fatigue, acute blocked nose (congestion), joint pain, headache, diarrhoea, nausea/vomiting, loss of appetite, unexplained chest pain and conjunctivitis.

What do I do if I develop symptoms?

If you develop [symptoms](#) you should get tested immediately. You must not travel by public transport, taxis or ride-share. Wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth at all times, and tell staff immediately that you are a casual contact. In the rare occurrence if you can't get to a testing location you can call your local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 and they will advise you on how to get a test.

If you become severely unwell and it is a medical emergency, you should phone Triple Zero (000). Tell the ambulance staff that you are a contact of someone with COVID-19.

What if I'm identified as a casual contact and I'm away from home?

If you are away from home when you find out you are a casual contact, you must immediately get tested and travel directly to your accommodation to isolate.

If you can, you should spend your isolation period where you are staying now. This may be a hotel, motel or other form of accommodation, as long as you can safely stay there and separate from all other people while you wait for your test result.

If you are currently staying in temporary accommodation that ends before you get your test result, or you have been asked to leave your accommodation by the owner or manager, NSW Health will help you. In exceptional circumstances, you may be allowed to travel home to finish your isolation period. Please call your local Public Health Unit on 1300 066 055 for help in this situation.

What if I've been to a venue where there has been a COVID-19 case but I haven't been contacted?

If you know you have been to a venue where a COVID-19 case has been reported, but have not been contacted by NSW Health, please check the latest COVID-19 case locations and follow the advice for that place.