LIVING WITH COVID-19

Testing & Isolation

Do you have symptoms of COVID-19?
Symptoms of COVID-19 include a new or worsening cough, or two or more of the following: fever (i.e. chills, sweats), shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose/congestion, headache, nausea/vomiting/diarrhea.

Yes, I have symptoms

Someone in my household* has tested positive
- Self-isolate.
- Complete a COVID-19 test as soon as possible, and again 72 hours (3 days) after symptoms started.
- If you do not complete testing, you are required to isolate a full 7 days from the day your symptoms started.

I have been told I was exposed to COVID-19 (outside my household) OR I don’t know if I’ve been exposed, but I have symptoms
- Self-isolate.
- Get tested as soon as possible.

You can stop isolating: after you receive a negative PCR test result 72 hours after your first test AND you are feeling better.
OR
after you receive a total of 3 negative rapid tests: one taken immediately, one taken 72 hours (3 days) later, and one taken on day 5, AND you are feeling better.

No, I don’t have symptoms

Someone in my household* has tested positive

I’ve been exposed to COVID-19 outside of my household but do not have symptoms
- No isolation or testing is recommended.
- Monitor for symptoms.

You can stop isolating: after you receive 1 negative PCR test result OR after you receive 2 negative rapid test results: one taken as soon as possible and the second taken 48 hours (2 days) later. You are encouraged to stay home until your symptoms improve.

Note: If someone new in your household tests positive (and you are still testing negative), restart your testing from this date.

In the first 90 days (3 months) after you’ve recovered from COVID-19, you may have some short-term post-infection immunity. During this time, additional testing is usually not recommended. However, with the Omicron variant, immunity is thought to decrease as time goes on. You may choose to take a rapid test, particularly if you develop new symptoms near the end of the three months. If you test positive, you should consider this a new case and self-isolate for 7 days. If the test is negative, a second rapid test is recommended 48 hours later. If both tests are negative, or you choose not to test, stay home until symptoms are improving.

PCR testing is not recommended within three months of recovery as it may continue to detect the old virus.

HELPFUL LINKS:
- If you test positive on a rapid or PCR test, visit nshealth.ca/testedpositiveforcovid for more information (i.e. how long to self-isolate).
- If symptoms develop, isolate and book a test by completing the online assessment at covid-self-assessment.novascotia.ca/en or call 811 if you do not have access to the internet.