

Guidance from the Danish Health Authority

What to do if you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for novel coronavirus

In this pamphlet, you can find answers to some of the questions you may have if you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for novel coronavirus. You can read about the definition of a close contact, what to do if you are a close contact, when to be tested etc.

26 January 2021



Important information about novel coronavirus/COVID-19

COVID-19 is the name of the disease caused by infection with novel coronavirus.

Infection

To prevent the spread of infection, it is important to know how novel coronavirus is transmitted.



Contact spread: If someone who is infected with novel coronavirus has virus-infected saliva or snot on their hands, they can pass on the infection directly to others, for example by shaking hands with them. An infected person can also deposit the virus on surfaces such as door handles when coughing/sneezing or when touching the surfaces with contaminated hands. The next person who comes along and touches the same surface can then become infected when touching his or her own nose, eyes or mouth.

Droplet spread: An infected person can spread droplets containing the virus through coughing or sneezing. These droplets can be inhaled by another person or land in their eyes, nose or mouth.

Symptoms

Typical symptoms of COVID-19:



Dry cough

Fever

Difficulty breathing

Sore throat

Loss of sense of taste and smell

Muscle pain

General guidance on how to prevent infection

1. Self-isolate if you have symptoms of COVID-19, have tested positive or are a close contact of someone who is infected with novel coronavirus.
2. Wash your hands often or use hand sanitiser.
3. Cough or sneeze into your sleeve.
4. Do not shake hands, hug or kiss as a greeting.
5. Make sure to clean thoroughly – both at home and at work.
6. Keep your distance and ask others to be considerate.



If you are unable to comply with one of the recommendations, make sure that you comply with the others.

Provisional guidelines for close contacts

We have tightened our guidelines for close contacts in order to remain in control of the epidemic, despite the more contagious virus variants such as B. 1.1.7. These measures are temporary and apply to close contacts of infected people – regardless of whether they tested positive based on a PCR test or a rapid test.

Furthermore, provisional guidelines now also apply to close contacts of someone infected with a virus variant.

All measures remain in force until 7 February 2021.

1. Why is it important to trace close contacts?

People infected with novel coronavirus develop symptoms within 1 to 14 days of having been exposed to the virus. Especially in the days before an infected person develops any symptoms, there is an increased risk of infecting others. There are also some infected people who do not develop symptoms, but who can still be contagious.

If you have been in close contact with an infected person, you are at high risk of having become infected yourself. It is therefore important that you self-isolate and are tested to prevent you from passing on the virus to somebody else if your test result is positive. In this way, you can help break the chains of infection effectively.

The tracing of an infected person's close contacts only starts once that person has tested positive.

2. When are you a close contact?

You are a close contact if you have been in close contact with an infected person in one of the following periods:

- **Infected person with symptoms:** From 48 hours *before* the person's symptoms started and until 48 hours *after* the person's symptoms stopped.
- **Infected person without symptoms:** From 48 hours before the person was tested and until seven days after.

If you have not been in close contact with the infected person during one of these two periods, you are not a close contact and you do not have to do anything.

If you have been in close contact with an infected person during one of the above-mentioned periods, you are a close contact if you also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- You live with an infected person
- You have had direct physical contact (for example hugging) with an infected person, or unprotected and direct contact with secretions from an infected person (for example if you have been coughed or sneezed on by an infected person or touched a tissue or face mask etc. used by the infected person)
- You have been in close contact with an infected person at a distance of less than two metres¹ (for example during a conversation) for more than 15 minutes
- Pay particular attention in situations where the risk of infection is high, for example:
 - Activities with heavy exhalation, for example singing, loud conversation or shouting.
 - Physical activities such as fitness training or yoga.
 - Been together in an enclosed space with poor ventilation.

Typical close contacts are other members of the infected person's household that he or she shares a bedroom, sofa, hugs etc. with on a daily basis.

Close contacts also include the infected person's closest friends and/or family members that he or she has had close physical contact with (hugged or the like) or been sitting close to at dinner with less than one metre between you.

This may also apply to, for example, colleagues of an infected person, where it has been necessary to stand close together for more than 15 minutes without the recommended distance of two metres. This may also apply to situations where you have worked out or been singing with someone and you have been less than two metres apart for more than 15 minutes.

Close contacts of infected children include other children or adults in e.g. childcare institutions/daycare centres, in schools or in connection with leisure activities and they have had direct physical contact or played in close proximity to the infected child for more than 15 minutes.

You only become a close contact once the person you have been in close contact with or live with has tested positive for novel coronavirus, and only if you meet at least one of the criteria on the bullet point list on the previous page. This means that you do not need to be tested if you have been close to – or live with – someone who is a close contact of someone who has tested positive for novel coronavirus.

If you are a healthcare professional, please note that there may be special considerations in relation to when you are defined as a close contact. Please reach out to your supervisor or the management for more information and guidance.

¹ Temporary measure

How are you notified that you are a close contact?

You will typically be notified that you are a close contact:

- By receiving a call from Coronaopsporing (Corona Tracking) who helps infected persons trace close contacts
- By being contacted by someone you know who has tested positive
- By being contacted in connection with outbreaks of infection in schools, in daycare centres, educational institutions, at workplaces etc.

3. What should you do if you are a close contact?

As a close contact, there is no way of knowing whether you are infected until you have been tested. Therefore, you must act as though you were infected, and:

1. Self-isolate
2. Pay extra attention to hygiene and cleaning
3. Get tested twice for novel coronavirus

How do I self-isolate?

The most important way of preventing the spread of infection is by self-isolating – both those who have already tested positive and those who may have become infected because they are close contacts.

This means:

- That you should stay at home and not meet with people you do not live with. Stay at home and do not go out. Do not go to work and get others to help you with shopping, walking your dog etc. If you order food or other items for home delivery, make sure that deliveries are left outside your front door. Do not allow visitors to enter your home. Keep in touch by phone or video calls instead.

In many communities, local initiatives have been launched to help those who need support. Check to see if such support is available in your local area. You can also contact 'Røde Kors Parat' on **tel. 35 29 96 60** or visit rodekors.dk/parat.

- Avoid close contact with other members of your household. This is particularly important if you live with someone who is at risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Avoid close physical contact such as kissing and hugging and keep a distance of at least two metres from other people. Avoid sleeping together and spending too much time together in the same room. Ideally you use a separate toilet/bathroom. If this is not possible, you should clean surfaces, such as handles and taps, before the toilet/bathroom is used by other members of your household.

Make sure to wear a CE-marked face mask if, in exceptional circumstances, you need to leave your home, for example to be tested. [You can read more about how to use a face mask at our web page.](#)

What does it mean to pay extra attention to hygiene and cleaning?

Paying extra attention to hygiene and cleaning means:

- Washing your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water, or using hand sanitiser if you do not have access to soap and water. Using hand sanitiser is as effective as washing your hands. However, we recommend that you wash your hands if they are visibly dirty or wet, after using the toilet, after changing nappies and before handling food.
- Good hand hygiene is especially important after using the toilet, after blowing your nose and before you start cooking. It is important to care for your hands, for example by using an unscented rich hand cream to prevent dry hands and eczema.
- Avoid touching your face. Cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue/kitchen roll paper or into your sleeve. Place used disposable tissues in a bag and tie securely.
- Do not share towels with other people.
- Clean the room(s) you spend time in daily. It is particularly important that you clean objects, surfaces and contact points that are touched by many members of the household, such as handles, handrails, switches, keyboards, computer mice, armrests, the edges of tables, toys, taps, toilets etc.
- Remember to frequently air out the room(s) you spend time in.

What should the people you live with do if you are a close contact?

Avoid close contact with those you live with (by staying in a separate room, for example) while waiting for the result of your test. Your family and others you live with do not have to stay at home *if* you are able to avoid close contact with them at home. They may go to work, school, out shopping, etc., but they should pay extra attention to maintaining good hand hygiene, social distancing and any developing symptoms. It is only if one of your two tests is positive that those you live with become close contacts and have to self-isolate and get tested themselves.

If it is not possible to avoid contact, we recommended that those you live with also self-isolate until you get your negative test result and can break your self-isolation². However, you should avoid close contact with those you live with while waiting for your test result, and pay special attention to hygiene and cleaning, as described above.

² Temporary measure

4. How do you get tested?

When you are informed that you are a close contact of someone who is infected, you generally need to be tested twice.

How do you book a test?

To book a test, you must contact Coronaopsporing, which is a coronavirus tracking division under the Danish Patient Safety Authority. When you call Coronaopsporing, you will be given priority as a close contact.

This means that you will get an appointment quicker and you can book both tests at the same time.

- 1) Call **tel. 32 32 05 11** for guidance on how to proceed and on what days you need to have your tests taken. You will also be given a referral for the two tests.
- 2) Then go to coronaprover.dk (in English) to book the two tests.

Wear a CE-marked face mask when you leave your home to get tested. [You can read more about how to use a face mask at our website.](#)

On which days should you to be tested?

First test: At the earliest, the first test must be taken 4 days after you have last been in close contact with the infected person. We need to begin contact tracing as soon as possible if your test is positive.

Second test: The second test must be taken two days after the first test. It is imperative that you take the second test to make sure that you are not infected – regardless of whether the first test was negative or not.

If it has been more than 6 days (including day 6) since you were last in close contact with the infected person, you only need to be tested once. And you only have to book the first test.

If it has been more than 14 days since you were in close contact with the infected person and you have not developed symptoms, you do not need to be tested.

The Danish Health Authority recommends that you take a PCR test if you are a close contact.

Exceptions to when to get tested for close contacts:

As a close contact, you might have to be tested on other days than those mentioned above. This applies in the following situations:

You have been in continuous close contact with an infected person

- If you have been in continuous close contact with an infected person, for example because you live together, and the person is unable to self-isolate, for example a child, you must:
 1. Be tested as soon as possible. Even if this test is negative, you must not stop self-isolating.
 2. Be retested as soon as possible after the infected person is free from symptoms – that is 48 hours after the person no longer has any symptoms. If the infected person does not have any symptoms, this means seven days after the person's test was done. If this second test is negative, you can stop self-isolating.
- If you have had continuous close contact with an infected person, for example a member of your household, and the infected person has been isolated from you and the other household members, you must:
 1. Be tested as soon as possible. Even if this test is negative, you must not stop self-isolating.
 2. Be retested four days after your last contact with the infected person. If this second test is negative, you still cannot stop self-isolating.
 3. Be tested two days after the second test. You may only stop self-isolating if this second test is negative.

You have previously tested positive and are informed that you are a close contact

If you have tested positive for novel coronavirus within the past eight weeks, you do not need to be tested again, as the test may be positive due to inactive virus. However, you must pay extra attention to whether you develop symptoms. If you develop symptoms, we recommend that you self-isolate and get tested.

Especially about children

Most children only develop mild symptoms of COVID-19, but children should generally follow the same guidance as adults.

Children with symptoms of COVID-19 should therefore also be kept at home and be tested. If the test is positive, the child must stay at home from daycare centre or school until he or she has been free of symptoms for 48 hours.

Please remember that children need loving care and physical contact like hugs and comforting, and that this is far more important than keeping your distance. This applies regardless of whether you and/or the child test(s) positive.

You may choose not to test children aged 12 or younger who are close contacts and who do not have symptoms, as the test can be an uncomfortable experience for them. Instead, you must keep the child at home for seven days after he or she was last in close contact with an infected person.

Children who do not develop symptoms within those seven days may return to their childcare institution/school. If the child develops symptoms, you must keep him or her at home until 48 hours after the symptoms have disappeared.

[More information and guidance at our website.](#)

5. Once you get your test result

You can see your test result at sundhed.dk, or by contacting your doctor.

[What should you do if the test is positive?](#)

If virus was identified in the test sample, your test results are positive and the Danish text at sundhed.dk will read either:

- Positiv (positive)
- Formodet positiv (presumed positive)
- Påvist (detected)

If one of your tests is positive for novel coronavirus, you must self-isolate and follow the other precautions described in the Danish Health Authority's information material *What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus*.

If you have not yet had the second test, remember to cancel your appointment so that it can be used by someone else.

You do not need to be tested again to be regarded as having recovered. The test can be positive due to inactive virus, even if you are healthy and no longer able to infect anyone else. It is therefore not necessary for you to have a negative test to be able to return to work or school etc.

Anyone who tests positive will receive a letter in his or her e-Boks and get a phone call from Coronaopsporing, who can provide guidance on how to stay safe, how to trace close contacts etc. You can also call Coronasporing yourself on **tel. 32 32 05 11**.

If you need medical advice about the course of your illness etc., please call your own doctor.

What should you do if your test is negative?

If virus was not identified in the test sample, your test results are negative and the Danish text at sundhed.dk will read either:

- Negativ (negative)
- Ikke påvist (not detected)

Even if the first test result is negative, you have to remain in self-isolation³. You cannot stop self-isolating until your final test is negative – and, of course, you must not have any symptoms of COVID-19.

If you have to be tested three times because you have been in continuous contact with someone who is infected, for example a member of your household, you may only stop self-isolating following your final and third negative test result.

Even if you stop self-isolating, it is still important that you pay extra attention to maintaining good hand hygiene, cleaning and social distancing. The test is only a snapshot of your infection status at the time of testing. Therefore, it is important that you also take the second test (and for some, even a third test), to make sure that you are not infected.

You should also pay particular attention to possible symptoms of COVID-19 for 14 days after you have been in close contact with the infected person – even if you have tested negative.

If you experience COVID-19 symptoms, you must self-isolate, be tested and follow the other precautions described in the Danish Health Authority's information material [What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19](#).

³ Temporary measure

If you are a close contact of someone infected with a virus variant.

There is no evidence that the virus variant B.1.1.7 causes more severe illness or spreads differently from other coronavirus types.

However, other countries report that B 1.1.7 spreads rapidly and is more contagious - probably because people infected with this variant secrete more viral particles. Therefore, based on the precautionary principle, the following temporary precautions now apply if you are a close contact of someone who is infected with a virus variant such as B.1.1.7:

- You cannot end your self-isolation until 14 days after the last close contact took place (day 14).
- You must have a negative test response on day 14 before you can end your self-isolation. You still need to be tested on day 4 and day 6 after the last close contact you had with the infected person. If you test positive too, we have to begin tracing your contacts as soon as possible.
- If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 while you are in self-isolation, we urge you to get tested. Call Coronaopsporing to initiate contact tracing as soon as possible, even if you are still waiting for your PCR test results.

You will be notified by Coronaopsporing, if you are a close contact of someone infected with a virus variant such as B.1.1.7, and have to adhere to the guidelines mentioned above. You will typically be notified by Coronaopsporing, the infected person himself, or the management if there is an outbreak in your school, daycare facility, workplace, etc.

What to do if the test is inconclusive/non-assessable?

If one of the following test results is posted at sundhed.dk:

- Inkonklusiv (inconclusive)
- Ubedømmelig (non-assessable)

This means that your test result is unclear. You must therefore take a new test.

6. Further information

If you need medical advice about the course of your illness etc., please call your own doctor.

If you have tested positive for novel coronavirus, you will be contacted by Coronaopsporing who can assist you in tracing your close contacts. You can also contact Coronaopsporing yourself on **tel. 32 32 05 11**.

If you are a close contact, you can contact Coronaopsporing.

The Danish Health Authority's information material:

Please [go to our website](#) to see a list of all current publications in English – such as pamphlets, posters and films.