CDC Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Quarantine and Isolation

How are quarantine and isolation different?

Quarantine

Quarantine is used to **keep someone who might have been** *exposed* **to COVID-19 away from others**. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or if they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms. People in quarantine should stay home, separate themselves from others, monitor their health, and follow directions from their state or local health department.

Isolation

Isolation is used to **separate people infected with the virus (those who are** *sick* **with COVID-19 and those with no symptoms) from people who are not infected.** People who are in isolation should stay home until it's safe for them to be around others. In the home, anyone sick or infected should separate themselves from others by staying in a specific "sick room" or area and using a separate bathroom (if available).

How are quarantine and isolation similar?

Both quarantine and isolation:

- involve separation of people to protect the public
- help limit further spread of COVID-19
- can be done voluntarily or be required by health authorities

How do I know if I need to be in isolation or quarantine?
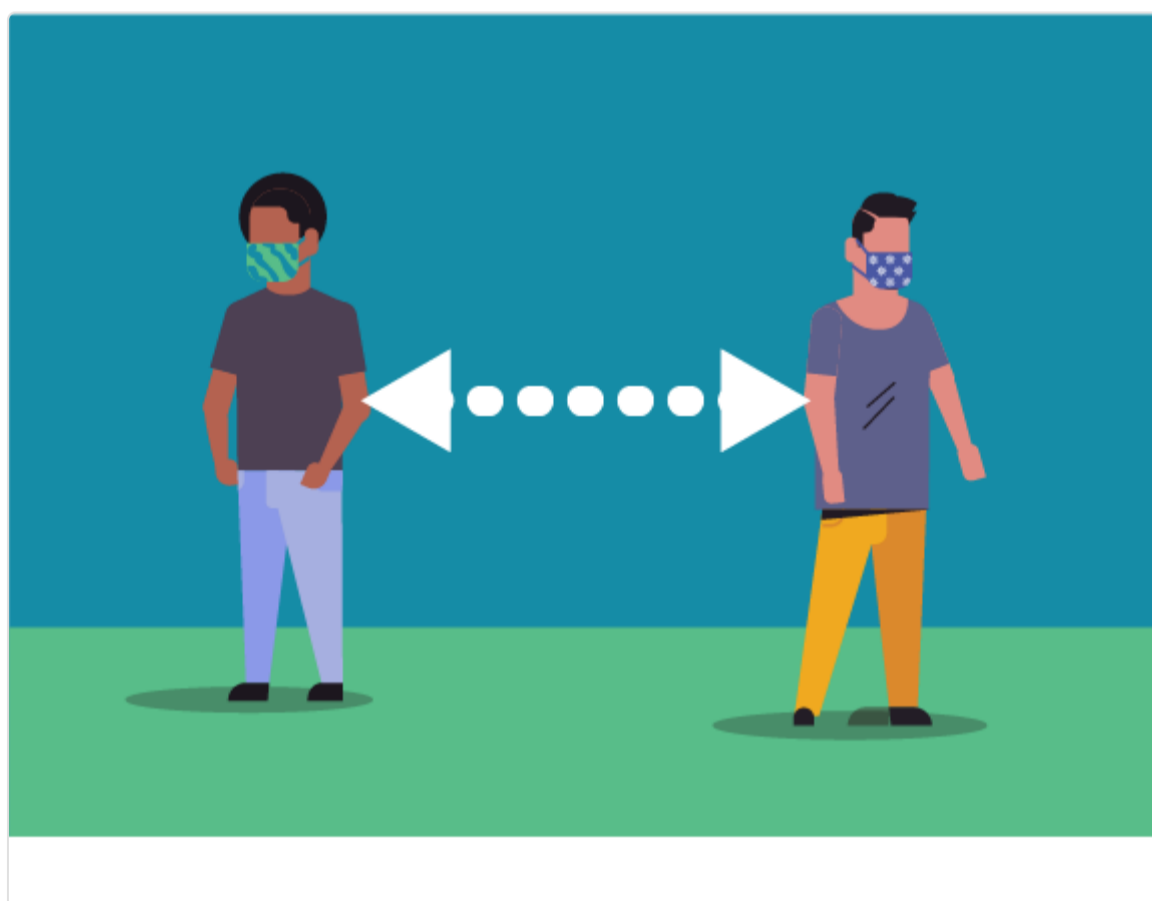
If you...	Steps to take...
If you live in a community where COVID-19 is or might be spreading (currently, that is virtually everywhere in the United States)	**Watch Your Health** Be alert for symptoms. Watch for **fever, cough, shortness of breath, or** other symptoms **of COVID-19.** • Take your temperature if symptoms develop. • Practice social distancing. Maintain 6 feet of distance from others, and stay out of crowded places. • Follow CDC guidance if symptoms develop.

If you feel healthy but:

- [Recently had close contact](#) with a person with COVID-19

Stay Home and Monitor Your Health

(Quarantine)

- Stay home until 14 days after your last exposure.
- Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms of COVID-19.
- If possible, stay away from people who are at [higher-risk](#) for getting very sick from COVID-19.

If you:

- Have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or
- Are waiting for test results, or
- Have cough, fever, or shortness of breath, or [other symptoms](#) of COVID-19

Isolate Yourself from Others

(Isolation)

- **Stay home.**
- **If you live with others, stay in a specific "sick room" or area** and away from other people or animals, including pets. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- Read important information about [caring for yourself](#) or [someone else who is sick](#), including when it's safe to end home isolation.

If you:

- Recently traveled from somewhere outside the United States or on a cruise ship or river boat

Follow CDC Guidance for:

- [returning from international travel returning from cruise ship or river voyages](#)

More Information

[How to Protect Yourself](#)

[Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Home](#)

[Gatherings and Community Events](#)

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