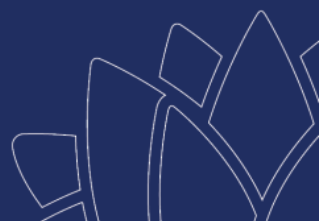


Testing positive to COVID-19 and managing COVID-19 safely at home



There are currently no rules in NSW which require you to self-isolate if you test positive to COVID-19, but it is strongly recommended you stay home and take steps to protect others.

Most people with COVID-19 can manage safely at home. Monitor your symptoms. If you are concerned about your symptoms, call your doctor. If you can't contact your doctor, use the online [Service Finder](#) to find one near you or call healthdirect on 1800 022 222 (free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). If symptoms become severe, call Triple Zero (000) immediately.

If you are at [higher risk of severe illness](#) and have tested positive, speak to your doctor as soon as possible. You may be eligible [for antiviral medicines](#). COVID-19 antiviral medicines work best if taken as soon as possible, and within 5 days from when your symptoms start.

What should I do if I test positive?

It is strongly recommended that you stay home and take steps to protect others. **You may be infectious for up to 10 days. You are most infectious in the 2 days before your symptoms start and while you have acute symptoms (such as a runny nose, sore throat, fever, cough). Some people with COVID-19 do not develop symptoms at all but are still able to infect others.**

To reduce the risk to others, NSW Health recommends you:

1. **Stay home** until your acute symptoms have gone
2. **If you are at [higher risk of severe illness](#), speak with your doctor as soon as you test positive.** You may be eligible for [antiviral medicines](#) or other treatments for COVID-19. COVID-19 antiviral medicines work best if taken as soon as possible, and within 5 days from when your symptoms start. Call healthdirect on 1800 022 222 if you can't contact your doctor, or use the online [Service Finder](#) to find one near you
3. **Don't visit people at [higher risk of severe illness](#), anyone in hospital or an aged or disability care facility for at least 7 days**
4. **Avoid large gatherings and indoor crowded places**, especially where you will be in contact with groups of people you don't live with
5. **Talk to your employer about when you should return to the workplace**

You should talk to your workplace about working from home, where possible. If you work in a high-risk setting such as health, disability and aged care, it is recommended that you stay away from the workplace for at least 7 days and until you have no symptoms to help protect other staff, patients, residents, and clients. If your employer needs you to return to the workplace before this time, they may ask you to take additional steps to protect others, subject to their work health and safety assessment.

6. **Tell people that you live with, or spend a lot of time with, that you have COVID-19**

People you live with or spend a lot of time indoors with are at greatest risk of catching COVID-19 from you. You should tell them you have tested positive and try to separate from them as much as possible. They should monitor for symptoms. If they get sick, they should stay home until they are well and follow the [advice for people exposed to COVID-19 factsheet](#). If they are at [higher risk of severe illness](#), they should talk to their doctor about testing advice.

How should I manage my symptoms?

If you are at [higher risk of severe illness](#) and have tested positive contact your doctor straight away and tell them your test result is positive. Your doctor will discuss your care and give you medical support if needed. This may be a prescription for [antiviral medicines](#) if you are eligible. If you can't contact your doctor, use the online [Service Finder](#) to find one near you or call healthdirect on 1800 022 222 (free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

Most people with COVID-19 have mild symptoms that can be managed at home and will recover in a few days. Some people have no symptoms at all. Most symptoms can be managed with:

- Rest
- Keeping hydrated with regular sips of water, or an electrolyte replacement drink if you have vomiting or diarrhea
- Over-the-counter medication like paracetamol and ibuprofen to relieve pain and fevers. Pregnant women should avoid ibuprofen.

Continue to take any medications you have been prescribed as usual. If you are unsure about continuing to take your current medication or treatment, or have any concerns about your health, call your doctor.

Call your doctor or healthdirect on 1800 022 222 if symptoms are worsening, you are concerned, or you have the following symptoms and don't improve with rest and hydration:

- Trouble eating and drinking
- Passing less urine than normal
- Feeling a little dizzy or lightheaded when walking around the room.

Call Triple Zero (000) immediately and tell the ambulance staff you have COVID-19 if you have severe symptoms like:

- Chest pressure or pain that is severe, getting worse or has lasted for 10 minutes
- Trouble breathing
- Feeling severely dizzy
- Feeling drowsy or confused
- Feeling like you might faint when standing.

Who is at higher risk of severe illness?

Some people are at higher risk of severe illness (more likely to get very sick, and may be at higher risk of needing hospital care), including:

- All people aged 70 years and older
- People aged 50 years with additional risk factors, including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, chronic lung disease (including moderate or severe asthma requiring inhaled steroids), neurological disease, severe chronic liver or kidney disease, active cancer or those who are not up to date with recommended vaccination
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged 30 years and over with additional risk factors listed above
- People who are moderately to severely immunocompromised of any age
- People with significant or complex disability
- Pregnant women (see [What if I am pregnant and have COVID-19?](#))
- Children with complex chronic conditions.

If you live in a remote area and have reduced access to healthcare or you are a resident in an aged care or disability care facility, discuss your risk with your doctor. You may be eligible for antiviral medicines or additional care.

If you are at higher risk of severe illness, you may be eligible for antiviral medicines or other treatments for COVID-19. These work best when taken as soon as possible, and within 5 days from when your symptoms start. Read more information on [antiviral medicines](#) including how to access them if you are eligible.

If you can't contact your doctor, use the online [Service Finder](#) to find one near you, or call healthdirect on 1800 022 222 to check if you are eligible for antivirals.

What if I am pregnant and have COVID-19?

Most pregnant women will be able to safely stay at home while they have COVID-19. During this time, it is important to:

- Drink plenty of fluids, like you would with a regular cold or flu
- Take paracetamol if you feel unwell, to help with symptoms. Ibuprofen is not recommended to take while you are pregnant
- Remain hydrated and mobilise regularly to reduce your risk of developing blood clots. If you have a history of blood clots or are obese, please contact your doctor or maternity care provider to discuss your management options
- Keep a close eye on your baby's movements. Call your maternity care provider immediately **if your baby's movements change** or if you experience:
 - vaginal bleeding
 - abdominal pain
 - constant clear watery vaginal discharge
 - contractions any time before 37 weeks
 - persistent fever
 - headaches
 - sudden swelling of your face and hands
 - you are in labour
 - have any serious concerns about your pregnancy
- Call Triple Zero (000) if you have difficulty breathing, develop chest pressure or pain, have severe headaches or dizziness. Tell ambulance staff that you have COVID-19 and are pregnant
- Continue your regular antenatal care after recovering from COVID-19.

See [COVID-19 advice for pregnant women and new parents](#) for more information.

How do I manage a baby or child with COVID-19?

Most children who test positive for COVID-19 can be safely cared for at home by their usual household carers, even if they are not vaccinated. When caring for your child with COVID-19 at home:

- Dress your child in appropriate clothing, so that they are comfortable – not sweating or shivering
- Give your child plenty of fluids to drink. They may not feel like drinking much so will need your help and encouragement
- Check if your baby seems to want more frequent breast or formula feeds. Breastfeeding is safe to continue if you and/or your baby has COVID-19
- Encourage your child to rest and not overdo it
- Use paracetamol or ibuprofen if you think your child is in pain or appears uncomfortable with a fever. Follow the instructions on the label. Only give the recommended dose in a 24-hour period otherwise this may be harmful for children.

Monitor your child's symptoms. Call your doctor or **healthdirect on 1800 022 222** if you notice:

- Persistent fever (>39°C) which is not responding to treatment
- Mild breathlessness
- Drinking less than half of what they would normally drink
- Urine (wee) output less than half of usual volume, and urine (wee) dark in colour
- Moderate vomiting or diarrhoea
- Unable to stand or walk.

If you are concerned your child is seriously unwell, has difficulty breathing, is severely dehydrated or fainting, call Triple Zero (000) immediately. Tell the phone operator your child has COVID-19.

How can I protect other people I live with?

If you live with other people, it is strongly recommended you stay separated from them until your acute symptoms (such as runny nose, sore throat, cough, fever) have gone. There are simple steps you can take to help prevent the virus spreading through your household.

Physically distance

This means:

- staying and sleeping in a separate room
- using a separate bathroom if available
- not being in the same room as another person.

Practise good hygiene

- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently or use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser
- Cover coughs and sneezes
- Wear a mask in shared areas or when caring for other members of your household
- Take extra care to remain separate from any members of your household who are at [higher risk of severe illness](#),

How soon should I get vaccinated after having COVID-19?

You should follow the latest guidance from to determine check when you should receive your next recommended vaccination.

Find a COVID-19 vaccination appointment near you using the [COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic Finder](#).

For further information, read:

- [frequently asked questions on COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [booster vaccine information](#).

What support is available if I have COVID-19?

COVID-19 support

- If symptoms become severe call Triple Zero (000) immediately
- Contact your doctor if you have health questions during your illness that are not urgent. If you can't contact your doctor, use the use the [Service Finder](#) to find one near you, or call healthdirect, on 1800 022 222 (free and available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week). healthdirect is staffed by registered nurses who can provide expert health advice and connect you to care. If you need an interpreter, the nurse will arrange one for you
- Eligible providers can claim aged care [COVID-19 leave payment grants quarterly](#). These grants replace the previous High Risk Settings Pandemic Payment.

Mental health support

- NSW Mental Health Line – 1800 011 511
- Beyond Blue helpline – 1800 512 348
- Lifeline – 13 11 14
- Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800
- Service NSW [mental wellbeing resources](#)
- NSW Health has partnered with [Sonder](#) to provide a free personal wellbeing service, available to help support you. The app provides confidential multilingual chat and phone access to a range of mental health and wellbeing support services. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Download the app at <https://be.sonder.io/wellbeing-nsw-health> and enter the code HERE2HELP.

Domestic violence support

- National sexual assault and domestic violence helpline on 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732)

Help in your language

- If you need an interpreter, please contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National on 131 450. This service is free and confidential.