

What to Do If You Test Positive for COVID-19

A Guide to Recovery at Home

After testing positive for COVID-19, you need to go home to rest and recover. While you're at home, there are steps you can take to keep others safe, as well as things you can do to aid in your recovery.

Remember to monitor your symptoms and call your health care provider if they get worse. If you're having difficulty breathing, losing consciousness, suffering from dehydration or you have a fever over 102 degrees, call 911 or get to a hospital immediately.

Isolate Yourself from Others

- Stay in a specific room away from other people and pets. Avoid sharing a bathroom with others if possible.
- Do not share personal items, like cups/dishes/utensils, towels and bedding.
- If you need to be around other people in the house, wear a mask.
- Don't leave your house, except for medical care. Wear a mask and keep 6 feet of distance between yourself and others, cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow and wash your hands often when you are out in public.

Sanitize Often

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- If soap and water are not available, you can use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- If possible, you should clean the room and bathroom where you are isolating, especially the high-touch surfaces (phones, remote controls,

tabletops, doorknobs, counters, bathroom fixtures, etc.) every day. If you can't clean your space, someone else should do it on an as-needed basis, and they should wear a mask and disposable gloves.

Avoid Extended Time Lying Flat on Your Back

- Laying on your stomach is known as the prone position, which can help your body get air into all areas of your lungs.
- We recommend trying to change your position every 30 minutes to 2 hours while awake; even sitting up is better than lying flat on your back.
- Before laying down, go to the bathroom. Grab a pillow, your phone and the TV remote or turn on music to help pass the time.

FOLLOW THIS SEQUENCE:

- 1 Lay on your belly for 30 minutes to 2 hours.
- 2 Turn and lay on your right side for 30 minutes to 2 hours.
- 3 Sit up in a chair or bed at a 30- to 60-degree angle for 30 minutes to 2 hours.
- 4 Turn and lay on your left side for 30 minutes to 2 hours.
- 5 Back to your belly for 30 minutes to 2 hours.



If any of those positions are painful or leave you short of breath, switch to the next position.

Stay Hydrated and Eat Healthy Food

- It is not uncommon to lose the ability to smell or taste normally. These symptoms may last weeks to months.
- Drink plenty of fluids, like water and herbal tea; avoid caffeine and alcohol.
- If you follow a specific diet, continue following that diet while you are recovering from COVID-19.
- We recommend talking to your doctor or health care provider to discuss your nutrition and supplement needs.

Exercise Your Lungs

- Exercising the lungs using an incentive spirometer often helps with other lung diseases, so it may aid in your recovery from COVID-19.
- An incentive spirometer measures how deeply you can inhale, and it helps you take slow, deep breaths to expand and fill your lungs with air. Incentive spirometers can help prevent pneumonia.



FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

- Sit up as straight as possible; do not bend your head forward or backward.
- Hold the incentive spirometer in an upright position.
- Place the target pointer to the level that you need to reach.
- Exhale normally and then:
 - ▶ Put the mouthpiece in your mouth and close your lips tightly around it. Do not block the mouthpiece with your tongue.
 - ▶ Inhale slowly and deeply through the mouthpiece to raise the indicator. Try to make the indicator rise to the level of the goal marker (1000).
 - ▶ When you cannot inhale any longer, remove the mouthpiece and hold your breath for at least 3 seconds.
 - ▶ Exhale normally.
 - ▶ Repeat 10-12 times an hour while you are awake.
- If you don't have an incentive spirometer, you can use a straw, inhaling slowly and deeply, holding your breath for 3 seconds and then exhaling normally.

Consider Monoclonal Antibody (MAB) Treatment

- Monoclonal antibodies are produced in a laboratory, and they serve as substitute antibodies to help our immune systems mimic natural COVID-19 antibodies.
- This treatment is specifically designed for people age 12 and older who test positive for COVID-19 and have had mild to moderate symptoms for less than 10 days. MAB also is a valuable treatment option for people with an underlying condition that may make them vulnerable to severe illness and hospitalization.
- The Department of Health opened three MAB clinics in Southwest Florida – in Bonita Springs, Immokalee and Englewood. Visit www.floridahealthcovid19.gov/monoclonal-antibody-therapy/ for more information and to make an appointment. The state's MAB clinics do not require a physician referral. This treatment is free of charge and available for both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals.
- Lee Health is also administering MAB via IV infusion at the Complex Care Centers at Lee Memorial Hospital, Coconut Point and Cape Coral Hospital. MAB at Lee Health requires a physician referral, and the patient must meet certain risk factors required by the FDA.
- MAB is not a replacement for vaccination.

GET VACCINATED

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends getting vaccinated even after recovering from COVID-19.
- The CDC says emerging evidence is showing that people get better protection by being fully vaccinated compared with having COVID-19. One study showed that unvaccinated people who already had COVID-19 are 2 times as likely to get the virus again than fully vaccinated people.
- You are eligible to get the vaccine after you complete your quarantine or isolation period following your COVID-19 infection.

- If you are treated with monoclonal antibodies, you should wait 90 days before getting a COVID-19 vaccine.
- Lee Health’s COVID-19 Vaccination Clinic is at Gulf Coast Medical Center. You can call 239-343-0999 or go to www.LeeHealth.org to make an appointment.

Know When to Return to Work or School

- Check with your employer for their policy for clearance to return to work.
- Employees in the general population who test positive for COVID-19 or have symptoms of COVID-19 should stay home and self-isolate. Employees should not return to work or other community settings until the criteria to discontinue home isolation are met. In general, individuals may return to work or congregate settings when:
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND
 - At least 24 hours have passed since the fever went away without the use of fever-reducing medications and improvement in other symptoms.
 - If the individual did NOT have symptoms but has a positive COVID-19 diagnostic test, the individual can return to work after 10 days have passed since the date of the positive COVID-19 diagnostic test.
- Check with your or your child’s school for their policy for clearance to return to school.

Return to Work Specific for Health Care Providers

- The CDC recommends a symptom-based strategy for the return to work.
- Check with your employer for employer specific policies
- Health care providers with mild to moderate illness who are not severely immunocompromised:
 - At least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND
 - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
 - Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved

- Health care providers who were asymptomatic throughout their infection and are not severely immunocompromised:
 - At least 10 days have passed since the date of their first positive viral diagnostic test.
- Health care providers with severe to critical illness or who are severely immunocompromised:
 - At least 10 days and up to 20 days have passed since symptoms first appeared AND
 - At least 24 hours have passed since last fever without the use of fever-reducing medications AND
 - Symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) have improved.
 - Consider consultation with infection control experts.

In addition to the information shared here, you can always find more tips and guidance at the CDC’s website – www.CDC.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health.

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