

**REVIEWED**

Coronavirus COVID-19

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COVID quarantine and isolation guide: What to know and what to have at home

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Most of us have been there—receiving a text from a friend or family member saying they just tested positive for COVID-19 or waking up with what could be the beginning of a COVID infection. With COVID-19 cases hitting record-high numbers in 2022 due to the highly-contagious omicron variant, the likelihood of someone in our circles testing positive is higher than ever. With this in mind, the possibility of needing to quarantine or isolate at home has the potential to arise. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says you must take these steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

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Staying at home for a long period of time on short notice can be frustrating, especially if experiencing uncomfortable symptoms due to an infection. That being said, there are plenty of products and services that can make your quarantine or isolation period a little easier, help protect others in the household from getting sick and provide relief if experiencing any symptoms. From face masks to cleaning supplies, here's what we recommend having at home in case you must isolate or quarantine.

What's the difference between quarantine and isolation?

You should **quarantine** if you have been exposed to COVID-19, meaning you had close contact with someone who has the virus. You should monitor your symptoms for potential COVID-19 infection and get tested to confirm if you have or haven't contracted the virus.

You should **isolate** if you are sick or confirmed to have COVID-19, even if you aren't showing symptoms. You should stay home and take extra precautions like wearing a mask around others and avoiding travel until your isolation time ends.

In either scenario, if possible, stay away from people you live with, especially those who are at high risk.

How long to quarantine from COVID-19

Depending on your vaccination status, you may need to quarantine if you've had close contact with someone who has COVID-19. Individuals up-to-date on their COVID-19 vaccinations do not have to quarantine in this scenario, but those not up-to-date should quarantine for at least five full days (the day of close contact is day 0). Regardless of vaccination status, you should get tested at least five days after you came into contact with someone with COVID-19 as breakthrough cases are possible. If you develop symptoms, you can get tested as soon as they develop, according to the CDC. Individuals should wear a mask around others for 10 days from the date of their close contact, no matter their vaccination status.

How long to isolate from COVID-19

If you test positive for or have symptoms of COVID-19, you'll need to isolate regardless of vaccination status. Isolation means staying home and wearing a well-fitted mask around others in your household to prevent the spread. The CDC says you should stay home for at least five full days (the day of close contact is day 0), isolating up to 10 days depending on how ill you are. You should only end your isolation if you have isolated for at least five full days, are fever-free for 24 hours and your symptoms are improving. You should still take precautions for the full 10 days by wearing a mask in your home or in public, avoiding travel and avoiding people who are at high risk.

► **For more details:** Visit the CDC's website for the latest information and recommendations on quarantining and isolation.

PPE to protect yourself or others in the house

Protective measures like face masks and at-home tests can help to stop the spread of the virus from one person to another, especially if you're quarantined at home with other members of

your household. Here's what you should keep on hand in case someone in your home is isolating or quarantined.

N95 or KN95s masks

Experts are now calling for the use of more protective masks such as N95 and KN95 masks as growing evidence supports the idea that cloth masks aren't protective enough against the most recent variants of COVID-19. Here's everything you need to know about N95 and KN95 masks, including where to buy them.

- **Get the Powecom KN95 Respirator Face Mask (10-Pack) from Bona Fide Masks for \$12**
- **Get the 3M Aura Particulate Respirator N95 (NIOSH-Approved) (10-Pack) from The Home Depot for \$21.47**
- **Get the N95 Medical Respirator Mask (NIOSH-Approved) from WellBefore From 1.59/each**
- **Get the N95 Mask (NIOSH-Approved) (10-Pack) from Vida from \$38**

Hand sanitizer

Hand sanitizer containing at least 60% alcohol can be an effective way to remove germs, according to the FDA. Using hand sanitizer regularly (or washing your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds) can help to decrease your chances of getting sick and help to prevent the spread.

Get Germ-X Hand Sanitizer (Pack of 12) on Amazon for \$25.99

At-home COVID tests

At-home COVID tests are a valuable resource for identifying positive COVID cases. If you or someone in your home has been exposed, these tests can be a helpful tool to monitor your health and to guide your day-to-day activities. Though they're not the easiest to find due to high demand, they are restocked regularly at major retailers like CVS, Amazon and more.

- **Get the BinaxNOW COVID-19 Antigen Self Test from Walmart for \$14**
- **Get the QuickVue At-Home OTC COVID-19 Test from CVS for \$23.99**
- **Get the IntelliSwab COVID-19 Rapid Test from Walmart for \$19.97**

Air purifier

Air purifiers can help to remove airborne contaminants in indoor spaces. The EPA cautions that using an air purifier is not 100% protective on its own to prevent COVID-19, however, used in conjunction with other CDC-recommended measures it can help to reduce exposure to the coronavirus.

Get the Winix 5500-2 Air Purifier from Walmart for \$159.99

Products to treat your symptoms

While asymptomatic cases of COVID-19 are possible, the CDC says symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, chills, cough, fatigue, headache or loss of taste and smell, along with other symptoms. To monitor or combat symptoms, these products can be especially helpful.

Pulse oximeter

A pulse oximeter is a medical device that attaches to the finger to measure oxygen saturation in the blood. It can be a gauge for reduced lung capacity, a common symptom of the coronavirus. If an oximeter shows that one's oxygen saturation is low (below 90% according to Mayo Clinic), this could be a sign to take your loved one for medical attention.

Get the Zaccurate Fingertip Oximeter from Amazon for \$23.60

Thermometer

When exposed to COVID-19, the CDC recommends watching for fever (100.4°F) for 10 days after exposure and monitoring for other symptoms. If you do end up contracting the virus, a thermometer will be necessary to gauge when you can end your isolation.

Get the iHealth No-Touch Forehead Thermometer at Amazon for \$19.99

Humidifier

When it comes to COVID-19, the CDC recommends humidifiers to relieve symptoms such as a cough or sore throat. While one of our top choices for a humidifier, the Honeywell

HWMhumidifier, is sold out, the newer model with nearly identical features is a great alternative. It can run for 10 hours and features a cup for soothing essential oils.

Get the Honeywell HWM845 Humidifier at Target for \$34.99

Tissues

Congestion or a runny nose are common symptoms of COVID-19, particularly with the newer omicron variant. Having tissues at home is a must. Puffs Ultra Soft tissues are our favorite kind because of how soft yet durable they are.

Get the Puffs Ultra Soft Facial Tissues (4-Pack) from Amazon for \$16.15

Water bottle

Drinking water is key to helping fight off illness as it flushes toxins through your system and hydrates you when you're losing liquids or fighting a fever. This Brita water bottle is the best we've ever tested because it's inexpensive, comes equipped with a filter for premium taste and keeps liquid cold for up to 24 hours.

Get the Brita Stainless Steel Water Filter Bottle from Amazon for \$25.20

Medicine

The CDC recommends taking over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help reduce fever and ease body aches. Consult your medical provider for information on how to best treat your COVID-19 symptoms.

Delivery services to bring you what you need

When you're isolating or quarantining, delivery services can be a game-changer. You can get anything from groceries to medication and even at-home COVID-19 tests delivered straight to your door through one of the many delivery services that exist these days.

Grocery delivery service

Whether you're trying to socially distance yourself from the grocery or you have to quarantine or isolate yourself, grocery delivery services like Instacart or Shipt can help you get what you

need to be delivered to your home in a matter of hours.

- **Sign up for Instacart**
- **Sign up for Shipt**

Pharmacy delivery

Walgreens and CVS, among other pharmacies, offer delivery options for medicine and other pharmaceutical needs, which is especially helpful when one can't leave their home as symptoms evolve. Consult your medical provider for information on how to best treat your COVID-19 symptoms.

- **Get delivery from Walgreens**
- **Get delivery from CVS**

Walmart+ or Amazon Prime

Walmart+ and Amazon Prime are premium subscription services that offer same-day, one-day or two-day shipping options on consumer goods, tech, groceries and more. Whether you find yourself in need of sick supplies or more food, these memberships can be a game-changer when you're stuck at home.

- **Sign up for Walmart+**
- **Sign up for Amazon Prime**

Cleaning supplies to disinfect your home

Keeping the home extra clean while someone is sick at home can help to prevent the spread from one household member to another. Staple items like disinfecting wipes can help keep surfaces clean, while extra home items like garbage bags can help keep contaminated items like tissues and paper towels away from the rest of the household.

Garbage bags

Between tissues and disinfectant wipes, you'll have plenty of items that you'll want to toss efficiently to avoid cross-contamination within the home. Having a healthy supply of garbage bags is key to disposing of items safely.

Get the Hefty Strong Large Trash Bags (56-Count) from Amazon for \$14.76

Disinfecting wipes

Disinfecting wipes or sprays can eliminate viruses, bacteria and allergens from surfaces around your home. Wiping down high-touch surfaces around the home can help to prevent spreading germs to other household members. What's more, the EPA approves Lysol products for use against the coronavirus specifically.

Get Lysol Disinfecting Wipes at Amazon for \$4.16

Laundry detergent

As it's important to wipe down surfaces around the home to maintain sanitary conditions, it's also important to decontaminate things like towels, blankets and other laundry items that are used by sick members in the home.

Get the Persil ProClean Liquid Laundry Detergent from Amazon for \$11.20

Entertainment while you're stuck at home

Isolation can be just that—isolating. There are plenty of products that can help to keep spirits up, including entertainment options to pass the time with. Whether you prefer Netflix binging, cuddling up with a new book or trying a new video game, here are some top picks for staying entertained in isolation or quarantine.

Streaming platforms

When you're sick at home, sometimes all you can really do—or want to do—is binge-watch TV and stream movies. There's no shortage of platforms to choose from—there's Disney Plus, HBO Max and Prime Video, to name a few.

- **Sign up for Disney+**
- **Sign up for HBO Max**
- **Sign up for Prime Video**
- **Sign up for Netflix**

Games

Several Reviewed staff members resorted to using their Nintendo Switches when they were out of commission due to COVID-19 infections. Once hard to get, these gaming systems are easy to get your hands on now and provide hours of entertainment. Board games and puzzles are another great way to pass time, especially if you're quarantined with others.

- **Get the Nintendo Switch with Neon Blue and Neon Red Joy-Con from Amazon for \$299.99**
- **Get the Settlers of Catan Board Game 5th Edition from QVC for \$59.73**
- **Get the Vincent's Cat Jigsaw Puzzle from RedBubble for \$33.32**

Kindle

Kindles provide access to an endless supply of books at one's fingertips to pass the time at home and relax while you're under the weather. The best we've tested is the Amazon Kindle Paperwhite Signature Edition (11th Gen) as it has a crisp display, tons of storage and fast charging capabilities.

Get the Kindle Paperwhite Signature Edition from Amazon for \$189.99

Essentials to comfort you when you're not feeling well

If the aches and pains hit as part of your COVID-19 symptoms, you'll want to make yourself as comfortable as possible at home. This means breaking out the cozy accessories and products that'll keep you warm and well-rested.

Slippers

Real shoes are a no-no when sick—slippers are a much more comfortable option to wear around the house. We found Ugg Scuffette slippers for women to be the best due to their easy slip-on back, extra wool in the toes for warmth and rubber bottoms to prevent slipping. For men's slippers, we preferred the L.L. Bean Venetian Wicked Good slippers for the perfect amount of fluff lining—they have enough to keep one from slipping out, but not too much to create sweat.

- **Get the Ugg Scuffette Slippers from Nordstrom from \$89.95**
- **Get the Men's Venetian Wicked Good Slippers from L.L. Bean for \$79**

Blankets

When you're sick is the perfect time to break out your weighted blanket or electric blanket—or both. Weighted blankets provide a calming effect with their gentle pressure, while electric blankets can keep you cozy and warm when the chills hit.

- **Get the Gravity Blanket from Gravity Blankets for \$215**
- **Get the Beautyrest Microlight Reverse to Berber Oversized Heated Throw from HSN for \$81.99**

Space heater

Chills are a common symptom with COVID-19, not to mention it's a particularly cold winter. If you're not looking to jack up your heat bill, a space heater can be a great option to heat up a small space as long as it's used safely.

Get the De'Longhi Mica Thermic Panel Heater from Amazon for \$111.49

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