

CLOSE CONTACTS FAQ

Who is considered a close contact?

For COVID-19, a close contact is defined as anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient was isolated.

What can close contacts expect to happen?

If you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, a contact tracer from the health department might contact you to inform you that you've been exposed to COVID-19. You should stay at home and self-quarantine for 14 days, starting from the last day you were possibly exposed to COVID-19. The contact tracer will help identify the dates of your self-quarantine. The contact tracer can also provide resources about COVID-19 testing in your area.

- ** Self-quarantine means staying home, monitoring your health, and maintaining social distancing (at least 6 feet) from others at all times.
- You should take your temperature twice a day, watch for symptoms of COVID-19, and notify your health department if you develop symptoms. You should also notify people you had close contact with recently if you become ill, so they can monitor their health. If your symptoms worsen or become severe, you should seek medical care. Severe symptoms include trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, or bluish lips or face.

If I am identified as a close contact & my test comes back negative, what does that mean?

You still must remain in quarantine for 14 days. You can develop symptoms anytime within those 14 days, so it is important to remain in quarantine to prevent spreading the disease.

What if I have been around someone who was identified as a close contact?

If you have been around someone who was identified as a close contact to a person with COVID-19, you should closely monitor yourself for any symptoms of COVID-19. You do not need to self-quarantine.

Is the quarantine enforceable?

If you receive an order from your local Health Department it is effective immediately upon notification and for the 14 day quarantine period or until the order is vacated by the health officer or by order of the court. **(Issued under the Authority Granted by Montana Code Annotated 50-2-116 and 50-2-118 related Administrative Rules of Montana)**