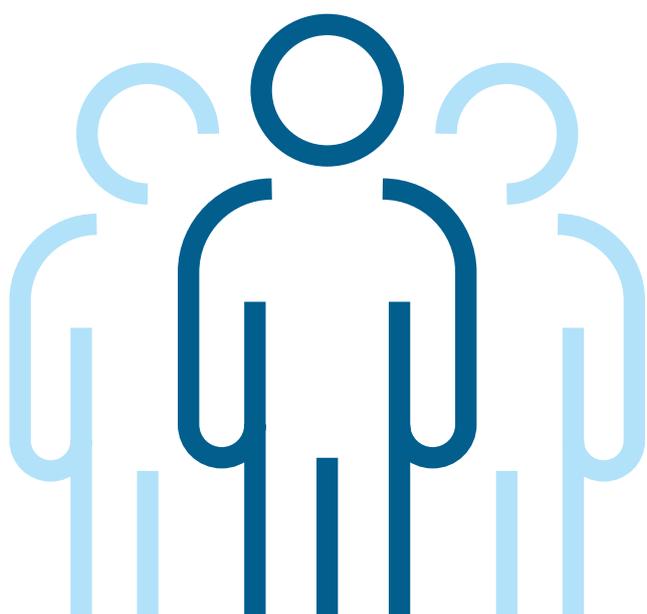


Guidance from the Danish Health Authority

# What to do if you are a close contact of a person who has tested positive for novel coronavirus

In this leaflet we answer some of the questions you may have if you are a close contact of someone who has been infected with novel coronavirus. You can read what we mean by close contacts, what to do if you are a close contact etc.

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# Important information about novel coronavirus/COVID-19

**COVID-19 is the name of the disease caused by novel coronavirus.**

## Infection



In order to prevent the spread of infection, it is important to know how novel coronavirus is transmitted.

**Transmission through contact:** Transmission through touching surfaces or objects which have been used by an infected person, and then touching your nose, eyes or mouth. The risk of contact transmission can be reduced by practising good hand hygiene and making sure to clean thoroughly.

**Droplet transmission:** Person-to-person transmission via small droplets expelled from the airways (respiratory tract) when an infected person coughs, sneezes etc. The droplets fall to the ground within one to two metres, and so the risk of droplet transmission is reduced through social distancing.

## Symptoms



Typical symptoms of COVID-19:

Dry cough	Sore throat
A high temperature	Headache
Breathing difficulties	Muscle pain

## How to prevent the spread of infection



The most important things to do in order of priority:

1. Isolating persons who display symptoms and tracing their close contacts
2. Practising good hygiene focusing on cough etiquette (respiratory hygiene), hand hygiene and points of contact
3. Social distancing focusing on distance, frequency, duration and barriers

If you are unable to comply with one of the recommendations, make sure that you comply with the others.

## 1. Why is contact tracing important?

People who are displaying symptoms are probably more infectious than people without symptoms, but people without symptoms may still infect others. This applies both before symptoms develop and if symptoms do not develop at all.

Most people infected with novel coronavirus develop symptoms within one to 14 days of having been exposed to the virus. There is an increased risk of infecting others in the days just before developing symptoms and before you realise that you are infected.

The purpose of contact tracing is to prevent transmission of the virus to others if you have been infected but have no symptoms. This is the most effective way of stopping possible chains of infection.

## 2. When are you considered a close contact?

The following persons are considered close contacts:

- Persons sharing a home with an infected person
- Persons who have had direct physical contact with an infected person (e.g. through hugging)
- People who have had unprotected and direct contact with secretions from an infected person (e.g. through being coughed on or through touching a used handkerchief, tissue etc.)
- People who have had close face-to-face contact (at a distance of less than one metre for more than 15 minutes) with an infected person (e.g. through having had a conversation with the infected person)
- Healthcare professionals who have been involved in caring for a patient with COVID-19 and who have not used personal protective equipment in the prescribed ways.

People who have followed the Danish Health Authority's guidance on social distancing, respiratory hygiene and hygiene in general are not very likely to be categorised as close contacts.

Typical close contacts are other members of your household, people you share a bedroom or sofa with, or hug etc. on a daily basis. Other close contacts may include any colleagues and friends you have been close to, for example if you have had to spend a long time in close proximity to a colleague, or if you have ended up sitting too close together with friends around a table. Close contacts of children include other children or adults in childcare institutions, schools and leisure clubs who have had close contact with a child, e.g. direct physical contact, or children who have been playing together at a distance of less than one metre for more than 15 minutes.

In most work situations, close contact with your colleagues will be limited, and colleagues are therefore generally not considered close contacts. Colleagues you work with, e.g. on a hospital ward, in a nursing home or in an office, with whom you have not had close contact (defined as spending more than 15 minutes with them at a distance of less than one metre) are not regarded as close contacts.

### **During what period must the close contact have taken place?**

You are considered a close contact if you have had close contact with an infected person from 48 hours before the person started displaying symptoms until 48 hours after the symptoms have ceased.

If the person who has tested positive has no symptoms, you are considered a close contact if you have had close contact with the infected person from 48 hours before they were tested positive until seven days after the test.

If more than 14 days have passed since you had close contact with an infected person, and provided you have no symptoms, you are considered infection-free and therefore do not have to take any special precautions.

## **3. What should you do if you are a close contact?**

If you are informed that you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for novel coronavirus, you should have a test done as soon as possible, even if you have no symptoms. As a close contact, there is no way of knowing if you are infected until you have been tested. Therefore, you must act as if you were infected until you have had the result of your test.

Until you receive the test result, you should:

1. Self-isolate
2. Practise good hygiene
3. Make sure to clean thoroughly
4. Be alert to possible symptoms of COVID-19

### **How do I self-isolate?**

The most important way of preventing the spread of infection is through ensuring that people infected with novel coronavirus self-isolate.

Self-isolation guidance:

- Stay at home, that is in your own home or in your own garden so that you do not risk coming into close contact with other people. Do not go to work or public areas, not even to go shopping etc. Ask others to do your shopping for you, take your dog for a walk etc. If you order food and other essentials for home delivery, make sure that deliveries are left outside your front door. Do not allow visitors to enter your home. Use the phone or video calls to talk to other people. It is particularly important to avoid all contact with people who are at risk of severe illness from COVID-19 (see [sst.dk/corona](https://sst.dk/corona)).

In many communities, local initiatives have been launched to support those in need. Check to see if such support is available in your local area. You can also contact 'Røde Kors Corona Hjælpenetværk' on tel. 35 29 96 60 or visit [rodekors.dk/corona/hjaelp](https://rodekors.dk/corona/hjaelp).

- Avoid close contact with other members of your household. This is particularly important if you live with someone who is at risk of severe illness from COVID-19.

Avoid close physical contact such as kissing and hugging and keep a distance of at least two metres. Avoid sleeping together and avoid spending too long in the same room. Ideally use a separate toilet/bathroom. If you only have one toilet/bathroom, you should make sure to clean all surfaces after use, e.g. by disinfecting toilet seats, basins and taps before they are used by other members of your household.

### **What does practising good hygiene involve?**

Practising good hygiene means:

- Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water, or use hand sanitiser if you do not have access to soap and water. Using hand sanitiser is as effective as washing your hands, but we recommend that you wash your hands if they are visibly dirty or wet, after toilet visits, after changing nappies and before handling food.
- Good hand hygiene is especially important after toilet visits, after blowing your nose and before you start cooking. It is important to use a moisturiser to prevent dry hands and reduce the risk of developing eczema.
- Avoid touching your face. Cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue or into your elbow. Place used disposable tissues in a rubbish bag and tie securely.
- Do not share towels with other people.

### **What does cleaning thoroughly involve?**

Cleaning frequently and thoroughly means:

- The room(s) you spend time in while ill should be cleaned daily. Use ordinary cleaning agents. It is particularly important that you clean points of contact as well as objects and surfaces that are touched by many members of the household, such as handles, hand rails, switches, keyboards, computer mice, armrests, the edges of tables, toys, taps, toilets etc.

### **What should other members of your household do if you are a close contact?**

Your family and other members of your household do not have to stay at home. They are allowed to go to work and to school and to go shopping etc. However, you should avoid all contact with other members of your household as much as possible while waiting for the result of your first test, as described above.

## 4. How do I get tested?

When you are told that you are a close contact of a person who is infected with novel coronavirus, you must contact *Coronaopsporing* (Corona Tracking), a division of the Danish Patient Safety Authority, which can refer you for testing. Once you have been referred for testing, go to [coronaprover.dk](https://coronaprover.dk) and book times for two tests:

**First test:** Book a time for your first test as soon as possible after your referral, but please note that the first test should be done a minimum of four days after your initial close contact with the infected person. If you have had close contact with an infected person for some time, e.g. because you live together, you should book a time for the first test as soon as possible.

**Second test:** The second test should be done two days after the first test. If more than six days have elapsed since you last had close contact with the infected person, you do not need two tests. In that case, you only have to book a time for one test.

If you are unsure about how and when to book a time for testing, please contact *Coronaopsporing* (Corona Tracking) on tel. 32 32 05 11 for guidance.

Make sure to wear a face mask as you travel from home to the testing station. You can read more about how to use face masks in the leaflet published by the *Danish Health Authority*.

### Special guidance concerning children

Most children develop only mild symptoms of COVID-19, but children should generally follow the same guidance as adults. Children who are close contacts should therefore isolate at home and be tested just like adults.

Please remember that children need loving care and physical contact like hugs and comforting, and that this is more important than social distancing. So if nobody else can take care of the child, you should do so in the manner that you normally would, while still maintaining high hygiene and cleaning standards. This applies no matter whether it is you or the child who tests positive.

Children may be taken to their childcare institution/go to school if their first test is negative and they still do not have symptoms. Children who have tested positive should not go to school/be taken to their childcare institution. Please read the information material *What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus*.

You may choose not to test children under the age of 12 who are close contacts and who do not have symptoms, as the test can be an uncomfortable experience for them. Instead, you can choose to keep such young children at home for seven days after they were last in close contact with an infected person. Children who do not develop symptoms within those seven days may return to their childcare institution/school.

## 5. Once you get the test result

### What should you do if the test is positive?

If one of your tests is positive for novel coronavirus, you must continue to self-isolate and carefully read the Danish Health Authority's information material *What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus*.

### What should you do if the test is negative?

If your first test is negative and you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19, you no longer have to self-isolate. However, it is still important that you follow the general guidance on how to prevent the spread of infection as the test result only gives a snapshot of the situation at the time of the test.

If you are due to have two tests, it is important that you have the second test done even if the first test was negative, simply to make sure that you are not infected.

You should be particularly alert to possible symptoms of COVID-19 for a period of 14 days after having had close contact with the infected person – even if you have tested negative.

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, it is important that you stay at home until you have recovered completely – that is for at least 48 hours after your symptoms go away.

## 6. Further information

If you have any questions about your illness, please call your doctor.

If you have questions about contact tracing or testing, please call *Coronaopsporing* (Corona Tracking) on tel. **32 32 05 11**.

If you have other questions, you can call the Danish government's hotline on tel. **70 20 02 33**.

If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and need to be tested, you can find further guidance in the information material *What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19*.

If you have tested positive for novel coronavirus, you can find further guidance in the information material *What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus*.

You can read more about novel coronavirus and COVID-19 at [sst.dk/corona](https://sst.dk/corona).