

Guidance from the Danish Health Authority

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

In this pamphlet, you can find answers to some of the questions you may have if you are a close contact of someone who has tested positive for novel coronavirus. You can read about the definition of a close contact, what to do if you are a close contact, when to be tested etc.

7 July 2021



## 1. Why is it important to trace close contacts?

Most people who have been infected with novel coronavirus develop symptoms between 1–14 days after having been exposed to the virus. In the days leading up to the person showing symptoms, there is increased risk of infecting others. There are also some infected people who do not develop symptoms, but who can still be contagious.

If you have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for novel coronavirus, you are at a higher risk of having been infected. It is therefore important that you self-isolate and are tested to prevent you from passing the virus to others if it turns out you are infected yourself. This is how you can effectively help break the chain of infection.

It is only once a person has tested positive for novel coronavirus that contact tracing starts.

### How are you notified that you are a close contact?

You will typically be notified that you are a close contact:

- By being contacted by the person who has tested positive
- By receiving a call from Coronaopsporing, who help infected people trace close contacts
- By being contacted due to outbreaks of infection in schools, in daycare centres, at educational institutions, at workplaces, etc.

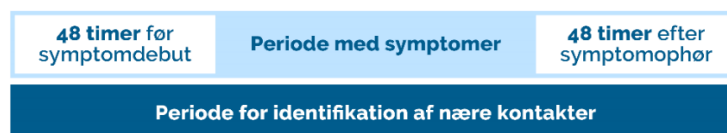
You can also contact Coronaopsporing yourself by calling 32 32 05 11.

## 2. When are you a close contact?

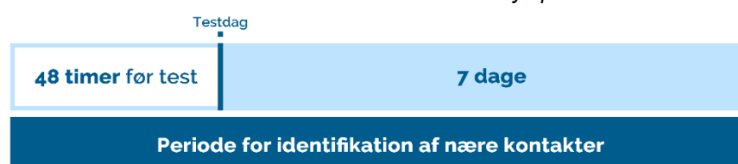
You are a close contact if you have been in close contact with an infected person in one of the following periods:

- Infected person with symptoms: From 48 hours *before* the person's symptoms started and until 48 hours *after* the person's symptoms stopped.
- Infected person without symptoms: From 48 hours *before* the person was tested until seven days *after*.

Figur 1. Periode for identifikation af nære kontakter ved symptomer



Figur 2. Periode for identifikation af nære kontakter uden symptomer



If you have been in close contact with an infected person in one of these periods, you are considered a close contact if you also meet at least one of the following criteria:

- You live with an infected person
- You have had direct physical contact with an infected person (e.g. hugging), or direct contact with fluids from an infected person (e.g. being coughed or sneezed on by an infected person, or touching an infected person's used tissue or face mask, etc.)
- You have been within 2 metres of an infected person for more than 15 minutes (e.g. in a meeting, at a dinner, at work, etc.).
- You have been within 2 metres of an infected person in one of the following situations, where there is an increased risk of infection:
  - Activities with heavy exhalation, for example singing, loud conversation or shouting
  - Activities involving physical exertion, e.g. exercise class or yoga
  - Being in an enclosed space with poor/lack of ventilation

If you work in healthcare, with the elderly, or certain social care sectors, please be aware that special precautions may apply as to when you are considered to be a close contact while at work. For more information, see the Danish Health Authority's [Guidance for Health Professionals and personnel in other sectors](#).

If you are a close contact of a close contact, you can read more about this on page 9.

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

As a close contact, you cannot know whether you have been infected with novel coronavirus until you have been tested. Act as if you are infected and do the following:

1. Self-isolate immediately (if you are fully vaccinated or have been previously infected, see the box below)
2. Pay extra attention to hygiene and cleaning
3. Have a PCR test. You should generally be tested twice (see page 6)

#### When can I stop self-isolating?

If your first PCR test is negative, continue to self-isolate. It only when your final PCR test is negative and you do not show any symptoms of COVID-19 that you can stop self-isolating.

If one of your tests for novel coronavirus is positive, you must continue to self-isolate and follow the additional guidance as described in the Danish Health Authority's [What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus](#).

If you are a close contact and are fully vaccinated\*:

- You do not have to self-isolate
- You should still be tested as a close contact (see page 6)
- If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or one of your tests is positive, self-isolate immediately

If you are a close contact and have previously been infected with novel coronavirus within the past 12 months\*\*:

- You do *not* have to self-isolate
- If it has been less than 12 weeks since you tested positive for novel coronavirus, you do not need to be tested
- If it has been more than 12 weeks since you tested positive for novel coronavirus, you should still be tested as a close contact (see page 6)
- If you have symptoms of COVID-19 or one of your tests is positive, self-isolate immediately

If you are not sure, call Coronaopsporing on 32 32 05 11 for advice and guidance.

\* You are fully vaccinated 14 days after your final vaccination.

\*\* Must be documented with a positive PCR test in a valid Corona Passport.

### How do I self-isolate?

The most important way of preventing the spread of infection is by self-isolating – both those who have already tested positive and those who may be infected because they are a close contact. This means:

- That you should stay at home and not meet with people you do not live with. Stay in your own home. Do not go to work, and get others to help with food shopping, etc. If you order food or other items for home delivery, make sure that deliveries are left outside your front door. Use a face mask with a CE mark, and keep 2 metres distance from others if you do have to go out for exceptional circumstances, e.g. to be tested or to walk the dog. Avoid going out at busy times when there are a lot of people.

In many communities, local initiatives have been launched to help those who need support. Check to see if such support is available in your local area. You can also contact the help network "Røde Kors Parat" on 35 29 96 60 or via [rodekors.dk/parat](https://rodekors.dk/parat).

- 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 2 metres from other people. Avoid sleeping together and spending too much time together in the same room. Ideally you should use a separate toilet/bathroom. If this is not possible, you should clean surfaces, such as handles and taps, before the toilet/bathroom is used by other members of your household.

If you cannot keep your distance from others in your household, e.g. if you live in a small home or because people you live with are at a higher risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19, your municipality may help you with an out of home isolation stay. You must have tested positive or be a close contact of someone infected with novel coronavirus before you can be granted an out-of-home isolation stay. Call your municipality to learn about your options.

What should the people you live with do if you are a close contact?

If the close contact is a child or another person who cannot keep their distance, one parent or other caregiver must self-isolate with them. If this is not possible, and the other people in the household cannot avoid contact with the person, the whole household must self-isolate until the close contact has received a negative result for their final test. Close contact within the household should be avoided as much as possible during the period, and increased attention should be paid to hygiene, ventilation and cleaning.

Children who are close contacts can also be granted an out-of-home isolation stay with a parent.

If you, as a close contact, can avoid close contact with those you live with, the others do not have to stay at home. They can go to work, to school, shopping, etc. However, they should be tested as a close contact of a close contact and should pay particular attention to maintaining good hand hygiene, keeping their distance, and any possible development of symptoms.

### [What does it mean to pay special attention to hygiene and cleaning?](#)

Paying particular attention to maintaining good hand hygiene and cleaning means:

- Washing your hands frequently and thoroughly with soap and water, or using hand sanitiser if you do not have access to soap and water. Although washing your hands and hand sanitiser are as effective as each other, it is recommended that you wash your hands when they are visibly dirty or wet, after using the toilet or changing nappies, or when handling food.
- Good hand hygiene is especially important after using the toilet, after blowing your nose and before you start cooking. It is important to care for your hands, for example by using an unscented rich hand cream to prevent dry hands and eczema.
- Avoid touching your face. Cough or sneeze into a disposable tissue/kitchen roll paper or into your sleeve. Place used disposable tissues in a bag and tie securely.
- Do not share towels with other people.
- Clean the room(s) you spend time in daily. It is particularly important that you clean objects, surfaces and contact points that are touched by many members of the household, such as handles, handrails, switches, keyboards, computer mice, armrests, the edges of tables, toys, taps, toilets etc.
- Remember to frequently air out the room(s) that you spend a lot of time in.

## 4. When should you be tested?

You should generally take two PCR tests when you are notified as being a close contact to someone infected with novel coronavirus.

### How do you book a test?

- 1) Call Coronaopsporing on [32 32 05 11](tel:32320511) for advice and guidance on what you need to do and when you should be tested. You will also receive a reference for all your tests.
- 2) Then go to [coronaprover.dk](https://coronaprover.dk) and book your tests.

You can read more on the [Danish Patient Safety Authority's website](#).

Use a face mask with a CE mark when you leave your home to be tested. You can read more about how to use a face mask at our website: <https://sst.dk/en/English/Corona-eng/Prevention-infection/Face-masks>

### On which days should you to be tested?

**First test:** At the earliest, the first test must be taken 4 days after you have last been in close contact with the infected person. The first test is taken so that contact tracing can start as soon as possible if your test is positive.

**Second test:** The second test must be taken two days after the first test. It is important that you take the second test to make sure you are not infected, even if the first test was negative.

The Danish Health Authority recommends that close contacts and people with symptoms take a PCR test.

If you develop symptoms of COVID-19 when self-isolating, take a quick test as soon as you can. This means that contact tracing can happen as quickly as possible if your test is positive. You must then take a PCR test. See the Danish Health Authority's [What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19](#).

### Other testing for close contacts:

As a close contact, you might have to be tested on other days than those mentioned above. You should only be tested once if it has been more than 6 days since you were in close contact with the person infected. This also applies in the following situations:

You have been in continuous close contact with an infected person

- If you have been in continuous close contact with an infected person (e.g. you live together), and the person cannot self-isolate (e.g. they are a child), you must:

1. Be tested as soon as possible. Even if this test is negative, you must not stop self-isolating.
  2. Be retested as soon as possible after the infected person is free from symptoms – that is 48 hours after the person no longer has any symptoms. If the infected person does not have any symptoms, this means seven days after the person's test was done. If this second test is negative, you can stop self-isolating.
- If you have been in continuous close contact with an infected person (e.g you live together), but the infected person has started to self-isolate, you should:
    1. Be tested as soon as possible. Even if this test is negative, you must not stop self-isolating.
    2. Take another test 4 days after last being in contact with the infected person. Even if the second test is negative, you must not stop self-isolating.
    3. Be tested two days after the second test. If the final test is negative, you can stop self-isolating.

## Special considerations for children

Most children only develop mild symptoms of COVID-19, but children should generally follow the same guidance as adults. This also applies if they become close contacts.

You may choose not to test children aged 12 or younger 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 young children at home for 7 days after they were last in close contact with an infected person.

If the child does not develop symptoms of COVID-19 within the 7 days, the child can return to school/daycare. If the child develops symptoms of COVID-19, you must keep them at home until 48 hours after the symptoms have gone. Read more in the Danish Health Authority's [What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19](#).

If your child has tested positive for and does not have symptoms of COVID-19, keep them at home for 7 days after the test was taken. If your child develops symptoms, keep them at home until 48 hours after the symptoms have gone. Read more in the Danish Health Authority's [What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus](#).

Please remember that children need loving care and physical contact like hugs and comforting, and that this is far more important than keeping your distance. This applies both if it is you or your child who has symptoms of, tests positive for, or is a close contact of someone infected with COVID-19.

## 5. After receiving your test results

You can see your test result on sundhed.dk, the 'MinSundhed' app, the 'Min læge' app or by contacting your doctor.

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

If virus was identified in the test sample, your test results are positive and the Danish text at sundhed.dk will read either:

- Positiv (positive)
- Formodet positiv (presumed positive)
- Påvist (detected)

If one of your tests is positive for novel coronavirus, you must continue to self-isolate and follow the additional guidance described in the Danish Health Authority's [What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus](#).

If you have not yet had your second test, remember to cancel your appointment so that it can be used by someone else.

Anyone who tests positive will receive a letter to their e-Boks and will be called by Coronaopsporing, who will advise on the rules to follow, how to contact those you have been in close contact with, etc. You can also contact Coronaopsporing yourself on 32 32 05 11.

If you need medical advice about the course of your illness etc., please call your own doctor.

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

If virus was not identified in the test sample, your test results are negative and the Danish text at sundhed.dk will read either:

- Negativ (negative)
- Ikke påvist (not detected)

You must continue to self-isolate even if your first test is negative. It is only when you have a negative result for your final test, and you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19, that you can stop self-isolating.



## Remember!

The test is only a snapshot of your infection status at the time of testing. Therefore it is important that you take your tests at the right time to be sure that you are not infected.

Although you can stop self-isolating, it is still important to pay attention to keeping your distance, maintaining good hand hygiene, and cleaning and ventilating frequently.

You must pay particular attention to possible symptoms of COVID-19 in the 14 days following close contact with an infected person, even if you have a negative test result.

If you experience COVID-19 symptoms, you must self-isolate, get tested and follow the other precautions described in the Danish Health Authority's [What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19](#).

### What should you do if the test is inconclusive or non-assessable?

If one of the following test results is posted at sundhed.dk:

- Inkonklusiv (inconclusive)
- Ubedømmelig (non-assessable)

this means that your test has not provided a clear result, or that the analysis of the test has failed. Therefore it is not possible to say whether or not you have COVID-19. You must take a new test.

## 6. What should you do if you are close contact of a close contact?

When a person has been in close contact with an infected person, tracing of the close contact's close contacts also happens.

The definition of a close contact of a close contact follows the definition of a close contact described in section 2. *When are you a close contact?*

The Danish Patient Safety Authority is responsible for tracing close contacts and close contacts of a close contact via their Coronaopsporing team.

As a close contact of close contact, you do not need to self-isolate, but you should still be tested (see box below).

It is also important that you pay increased attention to the development of symptoms of COVID-19, and follow the infection prevention recommendations on distancing, ventilating, maintaining good hand hygiene and cleaning, coughing or sneezing into your elbow, and allowing special consideration for people at higher risk of becoming severely ill from COVID-19.

What to do if you are a close contact of a close contact and:

- you are *not* fully vaccinated\*: You do *not* have to self-isolate. Get tested on the 4th and 6th day following the last time you were in contact with the close contact.
- are fully vaccinated\* or have previously been infected within the past 12 months\*\*: You do *not* have to self-isolate. Get tested once, on the 4th day following contact with the close contact.

If you are not sure

Call Coronaopsporing on 32 32 05 11 for advice and guidance.

\* You are fully vaccinated 14 days after your final vaccination.

\*\* Must be documented with a positive PCR test in a valid Corona Passport. If it is less than 12 weeks since you tested positive for COVID-19, you do not need to be tested

It is important that you self-isolate if you have symptoms of COVID-19 or test positive. Follow the recommendations as described in the Danish Health Authority's [What to do if you test positive for novel coronavirus](#) and [What to do if you have symptoms of COVID-19](#).

## 7. Further information

If you need medical advice about the course of your illness etc., please call your own doctor.

If you have tested positive for novel coronavirus, you will be contacted by the Danish Patient Safety Authority's Coronaopsporing team, who can help you trace your close contacts. You are also welcome to contact Coronaopsporing yourself on [32 32 05 11](#).

If you are a close contact, you can also contact Coronaopsporing. See also [What to do if you are a close contact of a person who has tested positive for novel coronavirus](#).

The Danish Health Authority's information material

Please go to [our website](#) to see a list of all current publications in English - such as pamphlet, posters and films.