COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions
SD DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

SYMPTOMS AND POTENTIAL EXPOSURE

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

Symptoms appear 2-14 days after exposure and can include:
- Fever or chills
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Cough
- Muscle/body aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Shortness of breath
- Congestion/runny nose
- Sore throat
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

What should I do if I have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is waiting for test results to come back?

What should I do if I've been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19?
...who has tested positive for COVID-19?
...who is being tested?
...who might have been exposed...
...who has been in close contact with someone else who might have been exposed?

What should I do if I've been in contact with someone who is being tested?
...and is experiencing symptoms?
...but is not experiencing any symptoms (yet)?

Self-quarantine and self-monitor
Self-monitor and practice social distancing
Practice social distancing

“Close contact” includes:
- anyone who has been within 6 feet or less for 15 cumulative minutes or more (in a 24-hour period) of an infected person starting from the 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the person was isolated.

Can I do a self-screening for COVID-19 symptoms and risks?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has developed a screening tool that asks about:
- Your symptoms
- Your potential risks (e.g., recent travel history)
- Contact with others who may have had COVID-19

Fully Vaccinated? Click here for recommendations.
How long can the COVID-19 virus live on surfaces?

This is a general guide of how long the virus can live on some surfaces:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Survival Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cardboard</td>
<td>24 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plastic</td>
<td>2 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>3 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal, Glass &amp; Paper</td>
<td>4 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aluminum</td>
<td>2-3 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Individuals should clean and disinfect all surfaces in their environment daily.

After visiting public spaces or bringing in takeout food or packages, people should wash their hands for at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water.

Can I practice social distancing outside?

It's possible to follow CDC social distancing guidelines or isolation or quarantine while outdoors. Department of Health staff will provide instructions to individuals who are in isolation or quarantine specific to the person's situation.

What is the difference between isolation and quarantine?

Isolation is recommended for people who are already sick. A sick person who is in isolation doesn’t leave home or interact with others in the household.

Quarantine is for people who have been exposed to the disease but are not sick. They stay in one place to avoid unknowingly spreading the disease to others. Quarantined individuals may not become sick at all.

Isolation and quarantine both help prevent or limit the spread of disease. Click here to learn more.

When is a person considered recovered from COVID-19?

A person is considered recovered when they have had no fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of medicine that reduces fevers), AND there has been improvement of symptoms (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved), AND at least 10 days have passed since symptoms first appeared.

Can fully vaccinated people start gathering again?

2 weeks after their final vaccine dose people can:
- If you are fully vaccinated, you can resume activities that you did prior to the pandemic.
- To reduce the risk of being infected with the Delta variant and possibly spreading it to others, wear a mask indoors in public if you are in an area of substantial or high transmission.
- You might choose to wear a mask regardless of the level of transmission if you have a weakened immune system or if, because of your age or an underlying medical condition, you are at increased risk for severe disease, or if a member of your household has a weakened immune system, is at increased risk for severe disease, or is unvaccinated.
- If you've been around someone who has COVID-19, you should get tested 3-5 days after your exposure, even if you don't have symptoms. You should also wear a mask indoors in public for 14 days following exposure or until your test result is negative. You should isolate for 10 days if your test result is positive.
All South Dakotans 12 years and older are eligible to receive the COVID vaccine.

Why should I get vaccinated for COVID-19?
COVID-19 can cause serious illness or even death. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you. And if you get sick, you could spread the disease to friends, family, and others around you. A COVID-19 vaccine greatly reduces the risk that you will develop COVID-19. In clinical trials, COVID-19 vaccines have been highly effective at preventing severe cases of COVID-19 that require hospital care or cause death.

Are the COVID-19 vaccines safe?
Yes! COVID-19 vaccines being used in the United States meet FDA's rigorous standards for safety and effectiveness. Millions of COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered in the United States since December 14, 2020, and all COVID vaccines being used here will continue to be monitored for safety.

How much will the COVID-19 vaccine cost?
The federal government is providing the vaccine free of charge to all people living in the U.S.

Will the shot hurt or make me sick?
No. Some people might get sore muscles, feel tired, or have mild fever after getting the vaccine, but most people report only a sore arm where they got the shot. These reactions mean the vaccine is working to help teach your body how to fight COVID-19 if you are exposed. For most people, these side effects will go away on their own in a few days. If you have any concerns, call your doctor or nurse.

Can the vaccine give me COVID-19?
You cannot get COVID-19 from any of the COVID-19 vaccines in use or being tested in the United States because none of them contains the live virus that causes the disease.

How do COVID-19 vaccines work?
Vaccines train our immune system to recognize the COVID virus and make cells to fight the virus. With vaccines, we can build immunity to a disease without getting the disease.

Do I need to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I've already had COVID-19?
Yes. Scientists do not yet know how long natural antibodies in people who have had COVID-19 will be protect them from being re-infected.
**Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I would like to have a baby one day?**

Yes. People who want to get pregnant in the future can receive the COVID-19 vaccine. Experts believe that COVID-19 vaccines are unlikely to pose a risk to a person trying to become pregnant in the short or long term.

**Is the COVID-19 vaccine safe for people who are pregnant?**

Yes. If you are pregnant, you may choose to be vaccinated when it’s available to you. There is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccination cause any problem with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta.

People who are trying to become pregnant now or who plan to try in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them. There is no evidence that fertility problems are a side effect of any vaccine, including COVID-19 vaccines. There is no routine recommendation for taking a pregnancy test before you get a COVID-19 vaccine.

If you have questions about getting vaccinated, talking with a healthcare provider may help you make an informed decision.

**Will the COVID-19 vaccine prevent me from infecting others?**

COVID-19 vaccines reduce the likelihood that you will develop and be able to spread COVID-19. More studies are needed to determine whether a vaccinated person who is infected despite vaccination is less likely to infect others.

**Do the vaccines work on the new COVID variants?**

Scientists are studying different forms, or variants of the virus that causes COVID-19 to see whether existing vaccines will protect people against them. CDC, in collaboration with other public health agencies, is monitoring the situation closely and will release more information when it is available.

**Where can I go for emotional health support?**

If you or someone you know needs help with mental health issues like depression, anxiety, or suicidal thoughts, call 1.800.273.8255 or 211.

It’s natural to feel stress, anxiety, grief, and worry during this time. Everyone reacts differently, and your own feelings may change over time. Taking care of your emotional health will help you think clearly and react to urgent needs to protect you and your family.

605Strong.com has emotional health information and resources available to help.

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**GENERAL RESOURCES**

**READ SOUTH DAKOTA’S BACK TO NORMAL PLAN AND LEARN MORE ABOUT COVID-19 IN SOUTH DAKOTA AT**

COVID.sd.gov

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