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
- ✓ Severe cough
- ✓ Shortness of breath
- ✓ Muscle/body aches
- ✓ New loss of taste or smell
- ✓ Congestion/runny nose
- ✓ Diarrhea
- ✓ Sore throat
- ✓ Nausea or vomiting

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?

Self-quarantine and self-monitor

...who is being tested?

Self-monitor and practice social distancing

...who might have been exposed...

Practice social distancing

...who has been in close contact with someone else who might have been exposed?

Reported COVID-19 cases have ranged from mild symptoms to severe illness and death. Some infected individuals experience no symptoms at all.

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

“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.
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:

| Surface      | Duration *
|--------------|-----------
| Cardboard    | 24 HOURS  |
| Plastic      | 2 DAYS    |
| Wood         | 3 DAYS    |
| Metal, Glass & Paper | 4 DAYS |
| Aluminum     | 5 DAYS    |
| Wood         | 24 HOURS  |

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.

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.

Why does the Department of Health issue public health notices identifying a business as a source of potential COVID-19 exposure in some situations but not others?

When possible, the Department of Health contacts individuals who have come into contact with (15 or more minutes within 6 feet or less) a contagious person so they can monitor their own symptoms or quarantine themselves. They do not issue a public health notice if all close contacts can be identified.

If an employee or patron of a business who has had a positive test for COVID-19 can’t identify persons they were in close contact with while able to transmit the virus, the Department of Health will issue a public health notice.

What does “flattening the curve” mean?

Flattening the curve refers to reducing the rapid transmission of COVID-19 and preventing a surge in hospitalizations that could put strain on hospitals and resources.
There is no way to ensure zero risk of COVID-19 infection for individuals in their day-to-day lives. The risk of an activity depends on many factors, such as level of COVID-19 spread in your community, whether you or people you live with are at greater risk of serious illness because of age or pre-existing health conditions, how many people are involved in the event or activity, and whether physical distancing (at least 6 feet) is possible. For more information on things individuals should consider for social activities during COVID-19, click here.

Is it safe to resume activities like shopping, outdoor recreation, dining out, going to church, holiday parties, attending school events, etc.?

Are some activities safer than others?

Activities are safer if you can maintain at least 6 feet of space between you and others, because COVID-19 spreads easier between people who are within 6 feet of each other. Indoor spaces with less ventilation where it might be harder to keep people apart are more risky than outdoor spaces. Interacting without wearing cloth face coverings also increases your risk. In general, the more closely you interact with others and the longer that interaction, the higher the risk of COVID-19 spread. As a reminder, if you have COVID-19, have symptoms consistent with COVID-19, or have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19, it is important to stay home and away from other people.

VACCINE

How many doses of COVID-19 vaccine will SD receive?

The federal government provides vaccine doses to states based on the State’s population.

When will the vaccine be available?

South Dakota has received initial doses of COVID-19 vaccine and has begun immunizing Phase 1a individuals. As additional doses of vaccines are received, we will then focus on immunization of other Phase 1 priority groups. Once Phase 1 individuals have been immunized, we will proceed to Phase 2 to immunize the general population. Phase 2 is expected to have sufficient supply for the general population.

Who is eligible for the vaccine?

Everyone will eventually be eligible to receive the COVID vaccination. However, priority populations have been identified to receive the vaccination first. For more information, visit doh.sd.gov/vaccine.
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.

Learn more about COVID-19 in South Dakota at COVID.sd.gov