

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Discontinuation of Home Isolation for Persons with COVID-19 (Interim Guidance)

CDC guidance for COVID-19 may be adapted by state and local health departments to respond to rapidly changing local circumstances.

Summary Page

Who this is for:

Healthcare providers and public health officials managing persons with coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) under home isolation.

Summary of Recent Changes

Guidance as of March 16, 2020

- New guidance is added for a strategy to discontinue home isolation without testing.
- Updated guidance for a test-based strategy: The recommendation to collect both NP and OP swabs at each sampling has been changed so that only one swab is necessary, preferably NP, at each sampling.

Limited information is available to characterize the spectrum of clinical illness, transmission efficiency, and the duration of viral shedding for persons with novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). This guidance is based on available information about COVID-19 and subject to change as additional information becomes available.

For Hospitalized Patients, see ([Interim Guidance for Discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions Among Hospitalized Patients with COVID-19](#)).

For Persons with COVID-19 Under Home Isolation:

The decision to discontinue home isolation should be made in the context of local circumstances. Options now include both 1) a time-since-illness-onset and time-since-recovery (non-test-based) strategy, and 2) a test-based strategy.

Time-since-illness-onset and time-since-recovery strategy (non-test-based strategy)*

Persons with COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:

- At least 3 days (72 hours) have passed *since recovery* defined as resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and** improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath); **and**,
- At least 7 days have passed *since symptoms first appeared*.

Test-based strategy (simplified from initial protocol) Previous recommendations for a test-based strategy remain applicable; however, a test-based strategy is contingent on the availability of ample testing supplies and laboratory capacity as well as convenient access to testing. For jurisdictions that choose to use a test-based strategy, the recommended protocol has been simplified so that *only one swab is needed at every sampling*.

Persons who have COVID-19 who have symptoms and were directed to care for themselves at home may discontinue home isolation under the following conditions:

- Resolution of fever without the use of fever-reducing medications **and**
- Improvement in respiratory symptoms (e.g., cough, shortness of breath) **and**
- Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID-19 from at least two consecutive

Negative results of an FDA Emergency Use Authorized molecular assay for COVID 19 from at least two consecutive nasopharyngeal swab specimens collected ≥ 24 hours apart** (total of two negative specimens). See [Interim](#)

[Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens from Persons Under Investigation \(PUIs\) for 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#) for specimen collection guidance.

Individuals with laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 who have not had any symptoms may discontinue home isolation when at least 7 days have passed since the date of their first positive COVID-19 diagnostic test and have had no subsequent illness.

Footnote

*This recommendation will prevent most, but may not prevent all instances of secondary spread. The risk of transmission after recovery, is likely very substantially less than that during illness.

**All test results should be final before isolation is ended. Testing guidance is based upon limited information and is subject to change as more information becomes available.

Additional Resources

NOTE: Specific guidance for return to work for healthcare facilities for healthcare personnel can be found at: [Criteria for Return to Work for Healthcare Personnel with Confirmed or Suspected COVID-19 \(Interim Guidance\)](#)

- [Discontinuation of In-Home Isolation for Immunocompromised Persons with COVID-19 \(Interim Guidance\)](#)
- [Interim Guidance for Implementing Home Care of People Not Requiring Hospitalization for 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\)](#)
- [Interim guidance for persons who may have 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(2019-nCoV\) to prevent spread in homes and residential communities](#)

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