

COVID-19 Update -3-19-2020

State health department calls on people, especially those who think they might have the illness, to self-isolate

Close contacts of sick people should self-quarantine

DENVER, March 19, 2020: The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) is urging self-isolation or self-quarantine for Coloradans and visitors to Colorado.

Self-isolation applies to people who:

- Have a positive COVID-19 test.
- Have symptoms of COVID-19 (coughing, shortness of breath and/or fever).
- Are getting ill and think they **might** have COVID-19. Symptoms, especially early on, may be very mild and feel like a common cold. Symptoms could include a combination of cough, body aches, fatigue, and chest tightness. Some people may not develop fever or fever may not appear until several days into the illness.

Self-quarantine applies to:

- People who are close contacts of a person who either has a positive test or symptoms - - even early symptoms -- of illness.

“Right now not everyone who has been exposed to or becomes ill with COVID-19 will be able to or need to have a test to confirm whether or not they have the illness,” said Dr. Rachel Herlihy, state epidemiologist, CDPHE, “but isolation and quarantine, even without test results, is what people must do to slow the spread of this illness in our state. Even people who feel mild illness, and aren’t sure, should follow self-isolation orders, and their contacts should follow self-quarantine orders.”

Self-isolation is for people who have symptoms of COVID-19 and means staying away from others until 7 days have passed since the symptoms began **and** until any fever has been gone for 72 hours and all other symptoms are improving.

Self-quarantine is for people who don’t have symptoms but are close contacts of people who have symptoms. It means staying away from others for 14 days to see if one becomes ill. People who become ill with COVID-19 symptoms (even early symptoms) while self-quarantining then start the self-isolation period.

CDPHE has put together how-tos for people who are self-isolating and self-quarantining. They are available at [covid19.colorado.gov/isolation-and-quarantine](https://www.colorado.gov/covid19/isolation-and-quarantine).

“We’re calling on all people in Colorado now to take personal responsibility and self-quarantine and self-isolate in order to protect people and our health care system,” said Jill Hunsaker Ryan, executive director, CDPHE, “and we are counting on everyone, including the media to share this information quickly and responsibly.”

Increasingly, cities and counties, including some in Colorado, are issuing stricter social distancing orders than [those that currently are in place in Colorado](#). The stricter orders mean everyone must stay home, except for certain essential activities. The terms of such orders could vary by location. More restrictive orders are a more aggressive approach intended to enforce social distancing and keep people at home to limit disease spread.

Continue to stay up to date by visiting [covid19.colorado.gov](https://www.colorado.gov/covid19).