

News Brief

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CDC Recommends Shorter COVID-19 Isolation and Quarantine

On Monday, Dec. 27, 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [reduced its recommended periods](#) for COVID-19 isolation (confirmed COVID-19 infection) and quarantine (potential COVID-19 exposure).

Asymptomatic individuals infected with COVID-19 have been told to isolate for five days from the day they test positive—down from the original 10. After, they should wear a mask when around others for an additional five days.

The CDC's new quarantine guidance was similarly updated. People who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second vaccine dose (or more than two months after getting the Johnson & Johnson vaccine) and not yet boosted should avoid others for five days after COVID-19 exposure. Then, they should diligently wear a mask for an additional five days afterward.

“Prevention is our best option: get vaccinated, get boosted, wear a mask in public indoor settings in areas of substantial and high community transmission, and take a test before you gather.”

-CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky, in a statement

Notably, the CDC said those who have received COVID-19 booster shots don't need to quarantine, but they should wear a mask around others for at least 10 days after potential exposure.

In all cases of isolation and exposure, the CDC said it's best to take a COVID-19 test as well.

What's Next?

The CDC has shortened its quarantine and isolation timetables as health experts learn more about COVID-19 and its strains, such as the coronavirus Omicron variant. The agency's decision was "motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of COVID-19 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after."

However, shortened isolation and quarantine times doesn't mean the risk of COVID-19 is going away or that prevention measures should be relaxed.

In its release, the CDC urged all eligible Americans to get vaccinated and boosted if they haven't been already.

Individuals interested in learning more about official COVID-19 guidance should visit the [CDC website](#).

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