



By email

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Changes to the self-isolation COVID-19 Guidance December 2021

CASES and SELF-ISOLATION

A case who had a positive PCR test, contacted by Test and Trace, and asked to self-isolate:

The legal requirement for positive cases to self-isolate 10-days remains in place. **However**, if cases take Lateral Flow Tests (LFT) on days 6 and day 7, at least 24 hours apart, and both tests are negative, they can **leave** self-isolation as soon as they have got the negative result from the second test. The first of these LFTs can be taken at any time on the sixth day and the next test should be taken 24 hours later.

For example, if symptoms started at any time on the 15th of the month (or if asymptomatic but first positive COVID-19 test was taken on the 15th), the case may take two daily LFTs from the 21st. If LFT results are negative on the 21st and 22nd, and they do not have a high temperature, then the case may end their isolation period after the negative test result on the 22nd.

However, those who end their self-isolation period before 10 full days are **strongly** advised to be cautious about what they do which means:

- **limiting close contact with other people outside their household, especially in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces**
- **working from home if they can**
- **wearing a face covering in crowded, enclosed or poorly ventilated spaces and where they are in close contact with other people**
- **limiting contact with anyone who is at higher risk of severe illness if infected with COVID-19 (including not visiting those in care homes or hospitals)**
- **following the guidance on how to stay safe and help prevent the spread**

They should follow this advice until 10 full days from when their self-isolation period started.

CONTACTS and SELF-ISOLATION

Contacts who are **fully** vaccinated or under the age of 18 years and 6 months and have had both their first and second COVID-19 vaccination doses do not have to self-isolate but are required to have daily LFTs for 7 days.

If they have a positive LFT or develop symptoms they should take a PCR test and self-isolate. They should only stop self-isolating if their PCR test is negative.

- Contacts who are **not fully** vaccinated do have to self-isolate for 10 days.
- Contacts who develop symptoms when self-isolating should arrange to have a PCR test.
- Contacts who have a positive test should follow the advice for a person with COVID-19 to stay at home and start a new self-isolation period. This begins when symptoms started, regardless of where anyone is in their original 10-day isolation period. This means that the total isolation period may be longer than 10 days.

Who counts as a Contact?

A 'contact' is a person who has been close to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 anytime from **2 days before the person was symptomatic up to 10 days from onset of symptoms** (this is when they are infectious to others). **If they did not have symptoms but tested positive, they are considered infectious from the 2 days before the test, up to 10 days after.**

Contact includes the examples below, if within the above time period:

- a person who has had face-to-face contact (within one metre), with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, including:
 - being coughed on
 - having a face-to-face conversation within one metre
 - having skin-to-skin physical contact
- contact within one metre for one minute or longer without face-to-face contact
- a person who has been within 2 metres of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for more than 15 minutes
- a person who has travelled in a small vehicle with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or in a large vehicle or plane near someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

[Stay at home: guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus \(COVID-19\) infection - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-or-confirmed-coronavirus-covid-19-infection)

[Self-isolation for COVID-19 cases reduced from 10 to 7 days following negative LFD tests - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/self-isolation-for-covid-19-cases-reduced-from-10-to-7-days-following-negative-lfd-tests)

[COVID-19: management of staff and exposed patients or residents in health and social care settings - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-management-of-staff-and-exposed-patients-or-residents-in-health-and-social-care-settings)

Support for self-isolation

Anyone asked by Test and Trace to self-isolate will be eligible for local support during the whole period of self-isolation and the £500 national payment if eligible. If a person does not have to self-isolate after 7 days but because of the reasons above such as working in a crowded situation cannot return to work, the support will be for the whole period when a person is unable to work.

Other controls

Other measures: Face, Hands, Space and Ventilation still need to be closely adhered to by all.

[Infection prevention and control for seasonal respiratory infections in health and care settings \(including SARS-CoV-2\) for winter 2021 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-prevention-and-control-for-seasonal-respiratory-infections-in-health-and-care-settings-including-sars-cov-2-for-winter-2021-to-2022)

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Val Thomas', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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