

I've tested positive for COVID-19. What kind of symptoms can I expect?

If you are very sick it is always OK to call 000, even if you have COVID-19.

Symptoms of COVID-19 affect everyone differently. The best way to protect yourself from developing severe symptoms is to get the [COVID-19 vaccine](#).

Most people develop symptoms around three to five days after being exposed. COVID-19 can affect people differently, but most people will experience mild symptoms that are similar to a cold or flu. Some people will become quite sick and need to be admitted to hospital. Some people will need to be admitted into intensive care and require life support and may die. Some people will not experience any symptoms at all. The severity of illness can depend on a number of factors including age, medical history and vaccination status. People who have COVID-19 usually become the most unwell at some point around five days after first getting symptoms.

You can still spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms or if you are fully vaccinated which is why you need to isolate away from others. Most people recover completely in about 2-3 weeks after first getting symptoms.

No Symptoms:

Some people experience no symptoms of COVID-19, even though they have been infected. This is called being 'asymptomatic'. However, people who have no symptoms can still spread the virus to others, so they are required to stay in isolation for 14 days.

Mild Symptoms:

Mild symptoms are often similar to a common cold or flu. You might experience a cough, runny nose, sore throat or fever. You may also experience a headache, body aches, loss of sense of taste or smell and feel very fatigued (tired). Some people also have symptoms like nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea.

Making sure you rest, drink fluids and take simple pain relief like paracetamol can help with these symptoms. If you are usually well and don't have any pre-existing medical conditions, you should be able to care for yourself at home. You might require help with getting deliveries of food or other supplies.



Your GP or other healthcare provider may check in with you to see how you're feeling. You can also make a telehealth appointment with your GP if you are feeling unwell or have any concerns. It is important to keep in contact with a healthcare provider if you have COVID-19, especially when you are at higher risk of complications or severe illness, as rapid deterioration can occur. There are also some treatments available that your doctor can provide that for some people can reduce your chance of needing a hospital admission or intensive care.

Moderate Symptoms:

You may have a very high fever (39 degrees) and feel very lethargic. You may also have a cough and feel short of breath particularly if you are exerting yourself (walking upstairs). You may need to rest in bed for the whole day. If you are experiencing these symptoms, it's very important to be assessed by your GP as soon as possible –make a telehealth appointment.

Severe Symptoms:

Some people will experience more severe symptoms of COVID-19. Signs that you need to see a doctor include severe headaches or dizziness, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing at rest (sitting on the couch), or chest pain or pressure. You should call **000** immediately.

If you are caring for someone who is experiencing severe symptoms, you should call **000** and tell them you are caring for someone with COVID-19.

