

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Reviewed January 2022

### What if a person has previously tested positive?

If someone has tested positive for COVID-19 within the last 90 days, if they are identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19 and are exempt from isolation, they are strongly advised to take part in daily testing. If the LFD test is positive, they should also take a confirmatory PCR even if it is within the 90 days.

### What about the change in isolation requirements?

From **Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January** all isolation periods for positive cases, **in England**, can leave self-isolation if they:

- Take two LFD tests on subsequent days, at least a full 24 hours apart, with the first test on at least the fifth full day of their self-isolation (not counting the 'onset day').
- Obtain negative results on both these days and do not have a high temperature.

### What happens if the day 5 test is still positive?

If the day 5 test is positive, you must continue to isolate. You can take further tests on subsequent days – day 7, 8 or 9. If two LFD tests taken 24 hours apart on consecutive days are negative, you can leave self-isolation. Self-isolation ends after day 10. You do not need a negative LFD test on day 10 to leave isolation.

### What happens if symptoms develop after a positive LFD result and self-isolation has already started?

If the person is self-isolating because of a positive LFD test result but did not have any symptoms at the time, and then develop symptoms within that self-isolation period, they will **NOT** need to start a new self-isolation period. The first LFD test detected COVID-19 early before symptoms developed, therefore there is no change to the isolation period.

### If a child under five has tested positive, can they leave isolation if they complete LFD tests on Day 5 and Day 6?

If your child under five tests positive, they are required to self-isolate for 10 days. Please note that LFD testing is not recommended on children under 5 years. However, at parent or guardian discretion they may be able to leave self-isolation early if they do not have a high temperature and if they take an LFD test on or after day 5 and a second LFD 24 hours later, and both are negative.

If either of the LFD results on days 6 or 7 show a positive result, they should continue their self-isolation until they have 2 consecutive negative tests. These should be taken 24 hours apart or their 10 days of isolation is completed, whichever is soonest.

If a parent or guardian decides not to carry out LFD testing, then they should continue with their self-isolation for the full 10 days

## Can a contact who has to isolate end their isolation if the PCR is negative?

No. If your PCR test result during your isolation period is negative, you must continue to self-isolate as you could still become infectious and pass the infection on to others. Stay at home for your full isolation period to avoid putting others at risk.

If your PCR test result is positive, follow the [stay at home guidance](#) for people who have tested positive for COVID-19, and start a further isolation period. This new isolation period begins from when you took the PCR test, regardless of where you are in your original 10 day isolation period. This means that your total isolation period may be longer than 10 days.

If you have previously tested positive for COVID-19, you will probably have developed some immunity to the disease. However, it cannot be guaranteed that everyone will develop immunity, or how long it will last. It is possible for PCR tests to remain positive for some time after COVID-19 infection.

## Should an isolating contact who has recently had COVID have another PCR test?

No. If you have previously received a positive COVID-19 PCR test result within the last 90 days and you are identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 you should not take a PCR test. You should only take a PCR test if you develop any of the [main symptoms](#) of COVID-19.

## When does self isolation end?

### Examples of when to end self-isolation if you have had COVID-19 symptoms or have received a positive COVID-19 test result

