

Self-isolation (Quarantine) for Asymptomatic Returning Travellers and Contacts of Cases



COVID-19 can spread without individuals having any symptoms, and it only takes one person to infect many. For this reason, people who have travelled or been in close contact with cases need to self-isolate (also referred to as quarantine) at home and get tested as directed by public health.

With the detection of variants of concern in Manitoba, more aggressive public health measures are needed to limit their spread and allow more time for people to be vaccinated. Some of these measures may involve additional public health contact and different guidance, including longer self-isolation (quarantine) periods. By following public health advice, including self-isolation (quarantining) you can protect yourself, your loved ones and people in the community.

Who needs to self-isolate (quarantine) and for how long?

- **Travellers** – if you have returned from travel, you may have been exposed to COVID-19. International and domestic travellers entering Manitoba must quarantine (self-isolate) for 14 days upon arriving in Manitoba (in accordance with the Federal Quarantine Act and provincial public health orders). NOTE: Federal and provincial travel restrictions are subject to change; up-to-date information (including exemptions) is available at: www.canada.ca/en/publichealth/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/latest-travel-health-advice.html and www.manitoba.ca/covid19/soe.html, respectively.
- **Contact with a case of COVID-19** – if you have been exposed to COVID-19 through close contact (within two metres and for more than for more than 10 minutes total over 24 hours) with an ill person, you are advised to self-isolate (quarantine) for 14 days after your last known contact with that person. A public health official will call you.
- **Contact with a household member who is self-isolating (quarantining) due to travel or is identified as a close contact.** – If they're not exempt and you've had close contact with them in the last 14 days since their return, you are advised to self-isolate (quarantine) until your household contact has finished their period of self-isolation (quarantine).

What does self-isolation (quarantine) mean?

When someone is feeling well, but has possibly been exposed to COVID-19, Public Health uses the term “quarantine” to describe the practice of self-isolation. Self-isolation (quarantine) requires staying at home and avoiding contact with other people (including household members who have not had potential COVID-19 exposure) to prevent spreading the disease to others in your home and your community. This means confining your activities to your home and outdoor property. If you live in a condo or multi-dwelling complex, you must stay in your suite. You may use your private balcony as long as it is two metres (six feet) away from your neighbour's balcony. Until you are finished your self-isolation (quarantine) period, do not leave home to go to work, school or other public places (e.g. curbside pickup from stores, restaurants, places of worship, etc.), unless you require emergency or urgent medical care.

If you have travelled as a family, or if all members of your household have been in contact with someone with COVID-19, you can self-isolate (quarantine) together without restrictions within the home. If you are the only family member who has travelled, or the only one in contact with

a person with COVID-19, you need to self-isolate (quarantine) from the rest of your household. This means staying in your own room or on a separate floor, and avoiding contact with other members of your household. If possible, use a separate bathroom. If sharing a bathroom, it should be cleaned /disinfected frequently. If you need to leave your room or floor, wear a medical mask and stay at least two metres (six feet) from other members of your household. You should also avoid contact with pets that live in your home. You must not have any visitors in your home during this time. If you live alone, arrange to have groceries and supplies dropped off at your door to minimize contact with others. Cancel or notify any service providers who regularly come into your home and let them know you are self-isolating (quarantining). This includes Home Care, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, social workers, etc. They will let you know how best to provide care during this time.

Will Manitoba public health officials follow up with me?

If you have been identified as a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case, public health officials will follow up with you during your period of self-isolation (quarantine). This follow up may be with someone from a regional health authority, the Public Health COVID-19 Contact Center, the Canadian Red Cross, Statistics Canada, 24/7 In Touch or other partners. Follow-up may also be via an automated calling system or SMS text messages. You will continue to receive calls until your case is closed.

As part of your monitoring and investigation cycle of care, you will be asked important information about testing, self-isolation and other public health guidelines in a question and answer format. For the automated calls and SMS text messages answers can be provided by keypad number options.

Automated calls will be made to the number provided at the time of testing and occur between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. seven days a week. To receive them you must remove any anonymous call-blocking settings on your phone.

Note that staff involved with case and contact management will never ask for personal information, such as banking information, social insurance numbers, credit card numbers, passport numbers, or other non-health related data.

More information on case and contact management, including automated calls, SMS text messages and privacy concerns can be found at [manitoba.ca/covid19/testing/monitoring/index.html](https://www.manitoba.ca/covid19/testing/monitoring/index.html).

How do I self-monitor my symptoms?

Anyone who is self-isolating (quarantining) should monitor their health for new or more severe symptoms. This means:

- Identifying any new symptoms, including fever, cough, headache, runny nose, sore throat, shortness of breath or breathing difficulties. For a full list of symptoms, visit: www.manitoba.ca/covid19/about/index.html.
- Taking your temperature twice a day (morning and night), using an oral digital thermometer (placed in the mouth). It is important to get an accurate temperature reading. Do not eat, drink, smoke or chew gum for 30 minutes prior to taking your temperature. Wait at least four hours after you have taken acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or Ibuprofen (Advil®).
- Using the [Temperature Self-Monitoring Form](#) to record your temperature, and any other symptoms you may experience during the 14 day self-isolation (quarantine) period.

What should I do if I develop symptoms?

If you develop a new onset, or worsening, of any symptom listed below, even if mild, isolate yourself from others immediately. Depending on your symptoms, it may be recommended for you to be tested. Use the online screening tool (<https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/screening-tool/>) or call Health Links – Info Santé (204-788-8200 or 1-888-315-9257) for information on whether you should get tested, where to go for testing and/or to be assessed.

- fever/ chills
- cough
- sore throat/ hoarse voice
- difficulty breathing
- loss of taste or smell
- vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours
- runny nose
- muscle aches
- fatigue
- pink eye (conjunctivitis)
- headache
- skin rash of unknown cause
- poor feeding, if an infant
- nausea or loss of appetite

If at any time you develop severe symptoms (e.g., difficulty breathing, shortness of breath), call 911 or seek medical attention at urgent care or an emergency department.

I have been tested for COVID-19. Where can I find out my test results?

Results can be accessed securely online at <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/covid19/test-results/>. If your test results come back positive for COVID-19 public health officials will also contact you directly.

Timelines for COVID-19 test results may vary due to current testing volumes and the location where you were tested. It may take several days for COVID-19 test results to become available. You must continue to self-isolate (quarantine)/isolate until you receive your test results.

If you do not have a Manitoba Health Family Registration Card, are not a resident of Manitoba, or you are unable to access your test results, you can contact the COVID Line at Health Links – Info Santé at **204-788-8200** or toll free at **1-888-315-9257**.

What can I do to stop the spread of COVID-19 to others in my home?

Even though you do not have symptoms now, you may develop symptoms within your self-isolation (quarantine) period and spread it to other people before you know you are ill. Some people never develop symptoms, and can still spread it to other people, including household members. This is why you are advised to avoid contact with other people (including household members who have not had potential exposure to COVID-19), while you are self-isolating (quarantining) at home. Public Health officials may also provide additional direction for self-isolation (quarantine) depending on your specific situation. You should also:

Clean your hands regularly

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 15 seconds or use alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 per cent alcohol:

- Before and after preparing food (avoid preparing food for others)
- Before eating
- After using the toilet
- After touching shared household items (e.g., dishes, towels, etc.)
- Before and after using a face mask
- After disposing of waste (e.g. a tissue) or handling contaminated laundry and whenever hands look dirty

Cover your coughs and sneezes

- Cough or sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue.
- Throw used tissues in the garbage and immediately wash your hands, or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

Avoid sharing household and personal items

- Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items.
- Do not share cigarettes or other items that are put in the mouth

Keep your environment clean

- Clean and disinfect high touch areas (toilets, taps, light switches, doorknobs, TVs, phones, electronics and TV remotes) at least twice daily, or as needed.
- Use store bought disinfectant. If not available use a diluted bleach solution (20 ml [four teaspoons] bleach for every litre of water) and allow the surface to remain wet for one minute before scrubbing.
- Use hot water when operating the dishwasher or washing machine.

Make sure your home has good airflow

- Open the window, as the weather allows.

For more information about COVID-19:

Call:

- Health Links – Info Santé at **204-788-8200** or **1-888-315-9257**

Or visit:

- Caring for Someone with COVID-19 in the home – www.manitoba.ca/covid19/resources/index.html#factsheets
- Manitoba government's COVID-19 website – www.manitoba.ca/covid19/
- Government of Canada's COVID-19 website – www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html