



What makes someone a “close contact” of a person with COVID-19?

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[Close contacts](#) are people who share indoor airspace e.g., home, clinic waiting room, airplane etc., for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period with someone during their infectious period. The infectious period is defined as:

- For **symptomatic** persons, 2 days before the infected person had any symptoms through Day 10 after symptoms first appeared (or through Days 5-10 if testing negative on Day 5 or later), and 24 hours have passed with no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and symptoms have improved, OR
- For **asymptomatic** persons, 2 days before the positive test (or sample collection) date through Day 10 after test (or sample collection) date (or through Days 5-10 if testing negative on Day 5 or later).
- Persons with COVID-19 who test negative on or after Day 5 and end isolation are no longer considered to be within their infectious period.

Cumulative exposures that add up to 15 minutes within a day may be considered close contact depending on intensity of exposure (e.g., did the person have multiple interactions in a confined space with a symptomatic person). Close contact can also take place during brief interactions where there is unprotected direct contact with the infected person’s body secretions (e.g., sneezing, coughing, sharing utensils, saliva).

Close contact occurs even if both people are wearing a mask or N95 respirator.

Does this close contact definition apply to everybody?

No. This definition does not apply to healthcare and certain other high-risk settings. Please see High Risk Exposures and Settings in the California Department of Public Health’s [Guidance on Isolation and Quarantine for COVID-19](#).