

**ALERT**

**CDC “Ends” 5-Day Isolation for  
Americans with COVID  
(and/or other respiratory infections)**



The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced in its *Updated Respiratory Virus Guidance* on March 1, 2024, that while COVID-19 remains an important public health threat, it's no longer the emergency that it once was, and its health impacts increasingly resemble those of other respiratory viral illnesses, including influenza and RSV.

Based on “key drivers and indicators”, the Center determined that its isolation-time guidelines of 5 days, adopted in 2021 for asymptomatic cases, are no longer applicable for COVID patients “...if they have been fever free for at least 24 hours without the aid of medications and if their symptoms are improving”. With that qualifying statement, individuals with COVID-19 need not isolate for five days before returning to work or school.

According to its release, far fewer people are currently getting seriously ill from COVID-19 due to the use and implementation of widely available “protective tools”, like vaccination and treatment, that have resulted in decreasing the risks of COVID-19 disease. Current data indicate rates of hospitalizations and deaths are down substantially, and that clinically COVID-19 has become similar to, or even less severe in hospitalized people, than influenza and RSV.

Key drivers and indicators of the reduction in threat from Covid-19 include:

- Weekly hospital admissions for COVID-19 have decreased by more than 75% and deaths by more than 90% compared to January 2022, the peak of the initial Omicron wave.
- Complications like multisystem inflammatory syndrome are now less common, and the prevalence of Long COVID appears to be decreasing.
- COVID-19 vaccinations have reduced the risk of symptomatic disease and hospitalization by about 50% compared to people not up to date on vaccination.
- Over 95% of adults hospitalized in 2023-2024 due to COVID-19 had no record of receiving the latest vaccine.
- More than 98% of the U.S. population now has some degree of protective immunity against COVID-19 from vaccination, prior infection, or both.

**NOTE:** COVID-19 remains a greater cause of severe illness and death than other respiratory viruses, but the differences between these rates are much smaller than they were earlier in the pandemic.

For additional information call CDC-INFO.

- 800-CDC-INFO
- 800-232-4636

Regular Business hours:

- **Monday – Friday:** 8:00 am – 8:00 pm **ET**
- **Weekends / Holidays:** 9:00 am – 5<sup>30</sup> pm (COVID questions only)

**English, Spanish, and other languages are available.**