



Public Health Brief

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Multiple Cases and Exposures to COVID-19 in Alpine County

The Alpine County Health Department has been notified of multiple cases of COVID-19 infections among county residents over the last week. Events and locations that have resulted in presumed exposures and cases include the Yoga Classes last Monday and Tuesday Sep 11 and 12, the 50's Plus trip to Cave Rock yesterday Sep 14, and dining at Stonefly Restaurant last evening Sep 14.

I recognize that the following information is long and complicated, so please scroll through it and pay attention to those sections that apply specifically to you. We all need to do everything we can to protect our health, that of our households, and our community.

Definitions:

Isolation: Separates those infected with a contagious disease from people who are not infected.

Quarantine: Restricts the movement of susceptible persons who were exposed to a contagious disease in case they become infected.

Confirmed Case, Potential Exposure and Close Contact:

Confirmed Case: A person who has received a positive result of the presence of SARS-CoV-2 virus as confirmed by a COVID-19 viral test or clinical diagnosis.

Potential exposure: Someone sharing the same indoor airspace, e.g., home, clinic waiting room, vehicle, airplane etc., for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total



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of 15 minutes) during a confirmed case's infectious period. However, outdoor venues should also be considered.

Close contact: "Close Contact" means the following. In indoor spaces such as homes, restaurants, offices, vehicles, airplanes, etc.), close contact is defined as sharing the same indoor airspace for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period (for example, three individual 5-minute exposures for a total of 15 minutes) during a confirmed case's infectious period.

Infectious Period:

- For symptomatic confirmed cases, 2 days before the confirmed case had any symptoms (symptom onset date is Day 0) through Days 5-10 after symptoms first appeared AND 24 hours have passed with no fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications, and symptoms have improved, OR
- For asymptomatic confirmed cases, 2 days before the positive specimen collection date (collection date is Day 0) through Day 5 after positive specimen collection date for their first positive COVID-19 test.

For the purposes of identifying close contacts and exposures, symptomatic and asymptomatic infected persons who end isolation in accordance with this guidance and are no longer considered to be within their infectious period. Such persons should continue to follow isolation recommendations, including wearing a well-fitting face mask through Day 10.



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Isolation and Quarantine Recommendations for the Public (This does not apply to workplaces, as employers may have their own specific requirements or recommendations)

All persons with COVID-19 symptoms, regardless of vaccination status or previous infection, should:

- Wear a mask around others for a total of 10 days.
- Self-isolate and test (home antigen test) as soon as possible to determine infection status. Knowing one is infected early after symptom onset enables (a) earlier access to treatment options, if indicated (especially for those who may be at risk for severe illness), and (b) notification of exposed persons (close contacts) who may also benefit by knowing if they are infected.
- If symptoms persist, after testing negative, consider continuing self-isolation and retesting in 1–2 days if testing negative, particularly if the negative test result was obtained during the first 1–2 days of symptoms. Consider [repeat testing](#) every 1–2 days for several days [if symptoms continue](#). If any of those tests are positive:
 - Follow recommended actions below (Table 1).
 - Contact us about available treatments, especially if you are at high risk for serious disease or with any questions concerning your care.

Table 1: Persons Who Should Isolate

Persons Who Test Positive for COVID-19	Recommended Actions
Everyone, regardless of vaccination status, previous infection, or lack of symptoms.	Stay home (PDF) for at least 5 days after start of symptoms (Day 0) or after date of first positive test (Day 0) if no symptoms).



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- Isolation can end after Day 5 if:
 - Symptoms are not present, or are mild and improving; AND
 - Fever has been resolved for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medication).
- If fever is present, isolation should be continued until 24 hours after fever resolves.
- If symptoms, other than fever, are not improving, continue to isolate until symptoms are improving or until after Day 10.
- If the confirmed case has severe symptoms, or is at high risk of serious disease or has questions concerning care, they should contact us for available treatment.
- Wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings.*
- After ending isolation, if symptoms recur or worsen, test again and if positive, restart isolation at Day 0.

*After ending isolation (no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and symptoms are improving), confirmed cases may remove their mask sooner than Day 10 if they have two sequential negative tests at least one day apart. If antigen test results are positive, the person may still be infectious and should continue wearing a mask and wait at least one day before taking another test.

Infected persons should notify close contacts to encourage them to get tested 3-5 days after exposure. Learn more on how to notify close contacts through the guidance on



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Table 2: Close Contacts – (No Quarantine)

Asymptomatic Persons Who are Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (No Quarantine)	Recommended Actions
<p>Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.</p> <p>Persons infected within the prior 30 days do not need to be tested, quarantined, or excluded from work unless symptoms develop.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test within 3-5 days after last exposure. • Close contacts should wear a well-fitting mask around others for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings and when near those at higher risk for severe COVID-19 disease (see masking section below for additional information). • Strongly encouraged to be up to date with COVID-19 vaccines. • If symptoms develop, test, and stay home (see earlier section on symptomatic persons), AND • If test result is positive, follow isolation recommendations above (Table 1).

All close contacts:

Should consider testing as soon as possible to determine infection status and follow all isolation recommendations above if testing positive. Knowing one is infected early enables (a) earlier access to treatment options, if indicated (especially for those who may be at risk for severe illness), and (b) notification of exposed persons (close contacts) who may also benefit by knowing if they are infected. If testing negative before Day 3, retest at least a day later at least once, during the 3–5 day window following exposure.

Close contacts who were previously infected in the last 30 days do not need to test unless symptoms develop. Close contacts who were previously infected in the last 31–90 days should test using an antigen test, even if asymptomatic and regardless of vaccination status, given the



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increased transmissibility and increased repeat infections with the circulating Omicron variant and the higher likelihood that they may be infected.

Additional considerations and recommendations for those at higher risk:

High-Risk Exposures:

Certain exposures may be deemed higher risk for transmission, such as those with an intimate partner, in a household with longer periods of exposure, during long rides in a vehicle, or while performing unmasked activities with increased exertion and/or voice projection or during prolonged close face-to-face contact (e.g., during contact sports like wrestling, during indoor group singing, during crowded events where cheering occurs like sporting events, concerts or rallies, particularly if indoors). In such cases, exposed persons should be extra vigilant in undertaking recommended mitigation measures.

High-Risk Contact:

A high-risk contact is someone who:

- may experience severe illness if they become infected with COVID-19 (for example, due to being elderly, unvaccinated or immunocompromised);
- may be more likely to transmit the virus to those who are at higher risk for severe COVID-19; and/or
- has higher transmission potential (more likely to spread virus to others due to high intensity/duration of indoor exposure to others).

Contacts with more potential to transmit to others or to transmit to higher risk secondary contacts should take greater care in following recommendations to limit spreading the virus to others during the 10 days following their exposure and may consider quarantining or self-limiting their exposure to others. All high-risk close contacts should get tested at least once and are strongly recommended to follow the testing and mitigation measures outlined in this guidance.



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Masking

As noted above, confirmed cases should isolate for five days, and mask indoors when around others during the full 10 days following symptom onset (or positive test if no symptoms).

However, if ending isolation before 10 full days (no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications and symptoms are improving), confirmed cases may remove their mask sooner than 10 full days after two sequential negative tests at least one day apart.

If antigen test results are positive, the person may still be infectious, and should continue wearing a mask and wait at least one day before taking another test.

Exposed persons should mask for 10 days following an identified close contact to someone with COVID-19, especially high-risk contacts.

All persons wearing masks should optimize mask fit and filtration, ideally through use of a [respirator](#) (N95, KN95, KF94) or surgical mask. See [Get the Most out of Masking](#) for more information.

Symptom Self-monitoring

Symptom self-monitoring should include checking temperature and watching for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or any other [symptoms that can be attributed to COVID-19](#) for 10 days following date of last exposure.

Schools and Child Care Programs

For guidance on the management of infected and exposed people in K–12 school and child care settings, see the [Guidance for K-12 Schools and Child Care Settings to Mitigate the Spread of Communicable Disease, 2023 -2024 School Year](#).



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Isolation at Home (Self-Isolation)

Self-Isolation

The majority of people with COVID-19 have mild to moderate symptoms do not require hospitalization, and can [self-isolate](#) at home by wearing a mask indoors and separating from household members. I

In addition, both the person and any caregivers should be informed and understand the indications for when the infected person should seek clinical care. Although mild illness typically can be self-managed or managed with outpatient or telemedicine visits, illness may quickly worsen days after the initial onset of symptoms. Treatment is most effective when started early, so individuals at risk of more serious illness should seek treatment as soon as possible.

The following are [general self-isolation steps](#) for people suspected or confirmed to have COVID-19 to prevent spread to others in their homes and communities.

- Stay at home except to get medical care.
- Separate yourself from other people in your home. Do not have any visitors.
- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth in indoor settings, including at home if other people are present, or you are around those who are immunocompromised, unvaccinated, booster eligible but have not yet received their booster dose, or are at risk for severe disease.
- Avoid sharing rooms/spaces with others; if not possible, open windows to outdoor air (if safe to do so) to improve ventilation or use portable air cleaners and exhaust fans.
- Use a separate sleeping area. If a sleeping area is shared with someone who is sick, consider the following recommendations:
 - Make sure the room has good air flow and follow [CDPH Guidance for Ventilation, Filtration, and Air Quality in Indoor Environments](#).
 - Maintain at least 6 feet between beds if possible.
 - Sleep head to toe, or with faces at least six feet apart.
- Avoid using the same bathroom as others; if that is not possible, clean and disinfect touched surfaces after use.



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- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, or if you can't wash your hands, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.
- Clean or disinfect "high-touch" surfaces routinely (at least once daily).

When to Seek Care

Persons in self-isolation should seek medical assistance:

- If they are at risk for severe illness or disease, seek clinical consultation as soon as possible to determine any treatment options, including [therapeutics](#).
- If their symptoms worsen significantly.

If the infected or exposed person is going to a medical office, emergency room, or urgent care center, the facility should be notified ahead of time that the person is infected with or has been exposed to COVID-19; the person should wear a mask for the clinical visit.

Any one of the following emergency warning signs signal a need to call 911 and **get medical attention immediately**:

- Trouble breathing.
- Bluish or grayish lips, face, or nails.
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest.
- New confusion or inability to arouse.
- New numbness or tingling in the extremities.
- Other serious symptoms.

Quarantine at Home (Self-Quarantine)

Self-Quarantine

Although quarantine is no longer required, persons choosing to [self-quarantine](#) should separate from household members, especially those who are immunocompromised, are [not up to date](#) with their COVID-19 vaccines, or who have not had COVID-19 in the last 90 days.



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Additionally, persons undertaking self-quarantine should:

- Stay home for at least 5 days, after last contact with a person who has COVID-19.
- Test at least once within 3–5 days if remaining asymptomatic.
- Quarantine can end after day 5 if symptoms are not present and a diagnostic specimen collected on day 5 or later tests negative.
- If unable to test or choosing not to test, and symptoms are not present, quarantine can end after day 10.
- Wear a well-fitting mask at home when other people are present, for a total of 10 days, especially in indoor settings.
- Get vaccinated and boosted.
- If testing positive, follow isolation recommendations in Table 1.
- If symptoms develop, test immediately and stay home.

Persons self-quarantining at home or in an alternate site should self-monitor for symptoms for 10 days following last date of exposure, even if they complete self-quarantine earlier.

If they test positive, their isolation period starts with their symptom onset date (or positive test date if no symptoms) counted as Day 0 and the next full day of isolation being counted as Day 1. They should follow guidance above for self-isolation and recommendations for seeking clinical consultation.



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To obtain FREE home antigen tests, you may come to the Health Department in Woodfords M-F from 8-Noon and 1-5. In Bear Valley, go to the Public Safety Office.

To be evaluated for the oral treatment Paxlovid, you must call us at 530-694-2146, Option 1, and leave your message. Dr. Johnson will answer you message within 24 hours, and provide you with FREE Paxlovid if you are eligible.

You may have heard that a new COVID-19 vaccine has been approved by the FDA and the CDC this past week. It will be available in pharmacies shortly, so please contact your pharmacy if you are interested. I will provide more details next week.

Please direct all questions to Dr. Johnson at 530-694-2146, Option 1.

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