



Factsheet

Home quarantine guidance for recently returned travellers who have been granted an exemption

All travellers who return from overseas and have been granted a hotel quarantine exemption must self-isolate at home for 14 days after arrival.

Last updated: 02 June 2020

How long do I need to be in home isolation?



If you have travelled from overseas you need to self-isolate for 14 days from the day you returned. This is because you may have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. If no symptoms develop within 14 days of your return it is very unlikely you have been infected but you should still be alert for symptoms.

Home isolation applies to all overseas travellers who have been granted a hotel exemption, even if you are currently feeling well.

Note: People in isolation who get tested for COVID-19 and the result is negative still need to remain in home isolation until the end of the 14 day period.

Getting to your home or a hotel if you are a returned traveller who has been granted an hotel exemption

People should travel directly to the place where they will undertake their self-isolation. People should travel directly to the place where they will undertake their self-isolation.

They can travel by:

- private car
- taxi or ride-share (you must travel in the backseat with a mask on)

If you are travelling to another state, you may need to apply for an exemption from that State or Territory. This information will be sourced from other states and territories by NSW Health and will be provided to you to facilitate your travel plan.

People travelling interstate must wear a mask.

Monitor symptoms and seek help if they develop

If people without symptoms for COVID-19 are tested and test negative, this does not mean they won't become sick later. This is because people who are incubating the infection typically only test positive once symptoms appear.

This is why it is so important to monitor for any symptoms of infection and then be tested as soon as possible.

During your 14 days of home isolation you should monitor yourself for any new symptoms. Watch particularly for:

- fever (37.5°C or higher)
- cough
- shortness of breath (difficulty breathing)

Other reported symptoms of COVID-19 include loss of smell, loss of taste, runny nose, muscle pain, joint pain, diarrhoea, nausea/vomiting and loss of appetite.

If you develop symptoms seek help as soon as possible.

You have three main options to get help if you have developed symptoms which might be COVID-19:

- Call the healthdirect hotline on 1800 022 222. When you call, tell them you have recently travelled overseas.
- Call your local doctor to make an appointment, and tell them you have recently travelled overseas.
- Visit your nearest COVID-19 clinic. When you arrive, immediately tell staff where you have travelled.

Note: If you go to see a doctor make sure you wear a surgical mask while you go there. You should travel directly to the doctor or COVID-19 clinic by private car. Do not use public transport.

If you become severely unwell and it's a medical emergency you should phone 000. Tell the ambulance staff that you have been in home isolation for COVID-19.

Can I go to work or school? Can I have visitors?

No. Home isolation means you must stay at your home and restrict your normal activities.

You cannot go to work, school, childcare, university, recreation facilities, or public areas, or go shopping.

You should not allow people who do not have an essential need to be in the home to visit while you are in isolation.

You cannot leave your house, apart from medical care, unless you have been given a specific exemption to do so and follow any directions you have been given to reduce the risk of close contact with other people.

You can leave your home to seek medical care or because of an emergency but you must wear a surgical mask.

Can I go into the garden?

If you are completely well you can:

- go into your private garden or courtyard or onto your private balcony if you have one

- go into common garden areas while wearing a surgical mask - please go quickly through any common areas.

Separate yourself from the other people in your home

If you are sharing your home with others you should, as much as possible:

- remain separated from others
- wear a surgical mask when you are in the same room as another person
- use a separate bathroom, if available
- avoid shared or communal areas and wear a surgical mask when moving through these areas
- not share a room with people who are at risk of severe disease, such as elderly people and those who have heart, lung or kidney conditions, and diabetes.

Wash your hands

You should wash your hands often and thoroughly with soap and water for 20 seconds, or use a hand sanitiser. Make sure you wash your hands:

- before entering an area used by other people
- after using the bathroom
- after coughing or sneezing
- before putting on and after removing facemasks.

Wear your mask properly

Make sure it covers your nose and mouth at all times and avoid touching your mask while you're wearing it.

Tips for you and your family to help cope with home isolation

Being in home isolation can be frightening, particularly for young children. We've put together some tips for coping.

- Talk to the other members of the family about COVID-19 to reduce anxiety. You can find accurate, up to date information on [NSW Health - COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).
- Reassure young children using age-appropriate language.
- Keep up a normal daily routine as much as possible.
- Arrange with your employer to work from home, if possible.
- Ask your child's school to supply lesson information and homework by email.
- Think about how you have coped with difficult situations in the past and reassure yourself that you will cope with this situation too. Remember that isolation won't last for long.
- Keep in touch with family members and friends via telephone, email or social media.
- Exercise regularly at home. Options could include exercise DVDs, dancing, floor exercises, yoga, walking around the backyard or using home exercise equipment, such as a stationary bicycle, if you have it. Exercise is a proven treatment for stress and depression.

- Ask your family, friends or other members of the household to pick up your groceries and medicines for you. If this is not possible, you may be able to order groceries and medicines (including prescription medicines) online or by telephone.

Do I need to be tested before leaving isolation?

Following 14 days isolation, if you remain well then you do not require any tests before being released from isolation.

If you develop any of the symptoms listed in the 'monitor symptoms' section of this document during the isolation period then you need to get assessed and tested for COVID-19. If you test negative you still need to remain in isolation until the original 14 day isolation period finishes.

For more information, refer to [Release from isolation](#).

More information and support

For more information and support while in home isolation:

- [Lifeline Australia](#) : 13 11 14
A crisis support service that provides short term support at any time for people who are having difficulty coping or staying safe.
- [Kids Helpline](#) : 1800 551800
A free, private and confidential 24/7 phone and online counselling service for young people aged 5 to 25 years.
- NSW Mental Health Line: 1800 011 511
Mental health crisis telephone service in NSW.
- Visit [NSW Health - COVID-19 \(Coronavirus\)](#).

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Contact page owner: [Health Protection NSW](#)