

Below is a summary and comments on the announcement. Of you are like me I am struggling with some parts of the guidance and would like everyone's collective wisdom how you will advise. I had some concerns about the Contingency category for HCWs with infection since it lumps boosted, vaccinated, and unvaccinated together.

CDC is shortening the recommended time for isolation from 10 days for people with COVID-19 to 5 days, if asymptomatic regardless of vaccination status, followed by 5 days of wearing a mask when around others. The change is said to be motivated by science demonstrating that the majority of SARS-CoV-2 transmission occurs early in the course of illness, generally in the 1-2 days prior to onset of symptoms and the 2-3 days after. Therefore, people who test positive should isolate for 5 days and, if asymptomatic at that time, they may leave isolation if they can continue to mask for 5 days to minimize the risk of infecting others.

Additionally, CDC is updating the recommended quarantine period for those exposed to COVID-19. For people who are unvaccinated or are more than six months out from their second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted, CDC now recommends quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Alternatively, if a 5-day quarantine is not feasible, it is imperative that an exposed person wear a well-fitting mask at all times when around others for 10 days after exposure. Individuals who have received their booster shot do not need to quarantine following an exposure but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. For all those exposed, best practice would also include a test for SARS-CoV-2 at day 5 after exposure.

If You Test Positive for COVID-19 (Isolate)

Everyone, regardless of vaccination status.

- Stay home for 5 days.
- If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house.
- Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.

If You Were Exposed to Someone with COVID-19 (Quarantine)

If you:

Have been boosted

OR

Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months

OR

Completed the primary series of J&J vaccine within the last 2 months

- Wear a mask around others for 10 days.
- Test on day 5, if possible.

If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home.

If you:

Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine over 6 months ago and are not boosted

OR

Completed the primary series of J&J over 2 months ago and are not boosted

OR

Are unvaccinated

- Stay home for 5 days. After that continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.
- If you can't quarantine you must wear a mask for 10 days.
- Test on day 5 if possible.

If you develop symptoms get a test and stay home

Comments: Why the CDC did not release guidance for the general public last week is unclear. The new recommendations “balance what we know about the spread of the virus and the protection provided by vaccination and booster doses,” Dr. Walensky said. I have a few concerns. First for isolation the new CDC guidance does not separate fully vaccinated from unvaccinated. Duration of infection has shown vaccinated people cleared the virus sooner. The CDC has not provided data to my knowledge backing up the agency’s recommendation for unvaccinated. [this was same for HCWs see above] Based on the study reviewed yesterday in the Briefing[and others], infections among vaccine recipients were characterized by a faster clearance time than that among unvaccinated participants, with a mean of 5.5 days for vaccinated versus 7.5 days in the unvaccinated. Perhaps the CDC could have said 5 days for fully vaccinated and 7 days for unvaccinated? I also wished that the CDC had recommended negative rapid test results before people ended their isolation. I understand that rapid tests are not readily available so this may be a compromise, but studies have shown wide variation in periods of being contagious. Therefore, I think a negative rapid test would offer assurance that people were not at risk for spreading the virus to vulnerable persons even if masked.