



FAQ About COVID-19 for New York City Health Care Providers

This document contains information for health care providers on COVID-19. The current version focuses on prevention and treatment policies and resources in New York City (NYC). It replaces a longer COVID-19 FAQ document that contained more general information.

For additional information and guidance, visit nyc.gov/health/covidproviders. For information on COVID-19 vaccines, visit nyc.gov/health/covidvaccineprovider.

For general COVID-19 information for providers, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/index.html.

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Epidemiology, Prevention and Treatment of COVID-19 in NYC

What are the most important steps to take to prevent COVID-19?

Remind patients of the key measures to prevent COVID-19 exposure and spread, regardless of which variants are circulating:

- Complete primary COVID-19 vaccination; get boosters, when eligible; and stay up to date on COVID-19 vaccination.
- Consider wearing a well-fitting mask in public indoor settings where vaccine status is not known. This is particularly important if the individual is unvaccinated, age 65 or older, or has a medical condition that increases their risk for severe COVID-19. Help your patients find the information they need to make informed choices about when to wear masks and what type of mask is best for them. Properly fitting respirators provide a high level of protection if worn correctly and consistently. For more information on masks, visit [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/masks.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/masks.html).
- Get tested for COVID-19 if symptomatic or recently exposed. If they are at high risk for severe COVID-19, test after traveling or attending a large gathering. Early testing can enable prompt treatment.
- Contact a provider right away if they test positive. Effective COVID-19 treatment is available for people at an increased risk for severe COVID-19, but treatment works best if started soon after symptom onset.
- Stay home if sick.
- Take other measures to prevent exposure and transmission. Visit [nyc.gov/preventcovid](https://www.nyc.gov/preventcovid) to learn more.

Be familiar with COVID-19 activity in NYC by regularly visiting [nyc.gov/coviddata](https://www.nyc.gov/coviddata) for information on levels, transmission (click the **Transmission tab**) and circulating variants.

How can NYC providers care for patients at risk or with possible or confirmed COVID-19?

Consider oral antivirals or monoclonal antibody therapy for patients with mild to moderate COVID-19 who have risk factors for progression to severe COVID-19. When given early after symptom onset, these treatments decrease the risk of hospitalization and death due to COVID-19. COVID-19 pre-exposure prophylaxis with Evusheld can protect people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised or unable to receive COVID-19 vaccination due to a severe adverse reaction to a COVID-19 vaccine or their components (read Health Advisory #4 at [on.nyc.gov/2022-health-advisory-4](https://www.on.nyc.gov/2022-health-advisory-4)). For information, visit [nyc.gov/health/covidproviders](https://www.nyc.gov/health/covidproviders) and click the **Outpatient Therapies tab** at the top of the page.

Whether or not you prescribe treatment, educate patients with COVID-19 who are at increased risk for severe outcomes on how to recognize signs of worsening illness and when to seek care:

- Advise them to call you or their primary provider if their symptoms worsen.
- Instruct them to call **911** immediately if they develop severe symptoms of any kind, including trouble breathing, chest pain, alteration in mental status or cyanosis.
- Consider scheduling a follow-up appointment during the second week of illness due to possible decompensation during this time.

- Consider using pulse oximetry to enhance home monitoring.
 - For information for patients, visit on.nyc.gov/covid-oxygen.

Where can I find information about which SARS-CoV-2 variants are circulating in NYC?

Visit nyc.gov/coviddata and click the **Variants tab** at the top of the page. Additionally, the CDC estimates recent proportions of circulating variants according to region and by jurisdiction at covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#variant-proportions.

Where can I find information about outpatient treatment for COVID-19 in NYC?

For information on oral antivirals, monoclonal antibodies and other outpatient therapeutics, visit nyc.gov/health/covidproviders and click the **Outpatient Therapies tab** at the top of the page.

Where can I find information on caring for patients with possible multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) in NYC?

MIS-C is a rare syndrome associated with SARS-CoV-2 that has been observed among children and young adults, including in NYC. For more information, visit nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/mis-c-ambulatory-ped-guidance.pdf.

Where can I find resources for New Yorkers with “long COVID” or post-COVID-19 conditions?

For information on post-COVID-19 care clinics in NYC, visit nyc.gov/health/covidproviders and look for **Post-COVID Care Clinics**.

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Testing and Reporting of Test Results

Who should get tested for COVID-19?

The following groups should be prioritized:

- People with symptoms of COVID-19
- People with no symptoms of COVID-19 but who have had recent close contact with someone with COVID-19 (who should be tested five days after the exposure, unless they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the preceding three months)

Consider testing other people who are asymptomatic (unless they have been diagnosed with COVID-19 in the preceding three months):

- Before or after attending a gathering or large event
- Before visiting someone who is at increased risk for severe COVID-19
- Periodically, if they have frequent in-person interactions with others at work or social settings, especially if they are in close contact with people without face masks in indoor settings

For testing recommendations before and after international and domestic travel, visit [cdc.gov/travel](https://www.cdc.gov/travel).

Where can people get tested for COVID-19 in NYC?

- To find testing sites, including sites that offer no-cost testing, visit [nyc.gov/covidtest](https://www.nyc.gov/covidtest).
- No-cost, rapid polymerase chain reaction (PCR) testing is available at COVID Express sites throughout NYC. For more information, visit [nyc.gov/health/covidexpress](https://www.nyc.gov/health/covidexpress).
- For NYC Health + Hospitals walk-in testing sites and locations to get free at-home tests in NYC, visit [nychealthandhospitals.org/covid-19-testing-sites/](https://www.nychealthandhospitals.org/covid-19-testing-sites/).
- To request free at-home tests from the U.S. government, visit [covidtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov).

Where can I direct patients for information about interpreting results of at-home COVID-19 tests?

For at-home testing guidance, see on.nyc.gov/home-testing.

Do NYC providers need to report COVID-19 test results?

All laboratories and facilities must report all positive, negative and indeterminate PCR-based test results and positive antigen-based test results directly to New York State (NYS) via the Electronic Clinical Laboratory Reporting System (ECLRS) within 24 hours of receipt. Results of point-of-care diagnostic tests and prescription at-home test results must be reported via ECLRS by the facility or provider who performed or prescribed the test. To learn more about the ECLRS, visit [health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/ehr/registry/eclrs](https://www.health.ny.gov/health_care/medicaid/redesign/ehr/registry/eclrs).

Providers without an ECLRS account can temporarily use the NYC Health Department's Reporting Central online portal or fax reports to 347-396-8991 using the Universal Reporting Form (URF) until ECLRS reporting is established. For assistance, contact the NYC Health Department's ECLRS team at nyceclrs@health.nyc.gov or NYS ECLRS Help Desk at 866-325-7743 or eclrs@health.ny.gov. To find the online portal and URF, visit [nyc.gov/health](https://www.nyc.gov/health) and search for [reporting central](#).

Results of at-home tests **do not** need to be reported to the NYC Health Department.

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Quarantine and Isolation

What is the definition of close contact to someone with confirmed COVID-19?

Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of a person with COVID-19 for at least 15 minutes over a 24-hour period. However, close contact can be defined differently, depending on the setting:

- **Health care personnel (HCP) exposures at work:** Visit [cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov) and search for [Interim Guidance for Managing Healthcare Personnel with SARS-CoV-2 Infection or Exposure to SARS-CoV-2](#).
- **NYC public schools:** Visit schools.nyc.gov/about-us/messages-for-families.

- **NYC nonpublic schools:** Visit nyc.gov/health/restart and click on [COVID-19 Health and Safety Information for New York City Nonpublic and Charter Prekindergarten \(Pre-K\) to Grade 12 Schools](#).

Where can I find up-to-date NYC guidance on isolation and quarantine and information on return-to-work guidance for HCP?

For isolation and quarantine provider guidance, including return-to-work guidance for HCP, visit nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/covid-19provider-quarantine-precautions.pdf.

HCP should also check with their employer or facility before returning to work.

What if my patient cannot quarantine or isolate away from others in their household?

If someone has tested positive for COVID-19 and needs support in their isolation or quarantine, they can call the NYC Test & Trace Corps Hotline at 212-COVID19 (212-268-4319) to connect directly with a resource navigator. Resources are available to support safe separation from others while in home quarantine or isolation (such as access to meals or medicines). For more information, visit nychealthandhospitals.org/test-and-trace/take-care/.

What if a person needs an isolation or quarantine order to qualify for NYS Paid Leave?

NYC residents who need isolation or quarantine orders to qualify for NYS Paid Leave can use the NYS self-attestation forms for [isolation](#) and [quarantine](#), both available at coronavirus.health.ny.gov/new-york-state-contact-tracing.

Orders also remain available through the NYC Health Department. People who need to quarantine or isolate for longer than five days or need assistance completing forms can call 212-COVID19 (212-268-4319) and press 6 at the prompt.

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Infection Control and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Where can I find NYC guidance on preventing COVID-19 exposures in outpatient practices?

Visit nyc.gov/health/covidproviders and click the [Facilities Guidance](#) at the top of the page for guidance and resources for outpatient health care providers and practices, including [Infection Control in Outpatient Settings](#), which can be found under the “Primary Care” drop-down menu.

Where can I find NYC guidance on preventing COVID-19 exposures in hospitals?

Visit nyc.gov/health/covidproviders and click the [Facilities Guidance](#) at the top of the page.

Can I get masks and other supplies from the NYC PPE Stockpile?

NYC has established a citywide PPE Service Center. Currently, the following settings are eligible to order PPE from the Service Center: acute care facilities (hospitals), Federally Qualified

Health Centers, nursing homes, adult care facilities, dialysis centers, NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities congregate settings, behavioral health congregate settings, home health agencies, select behavioral health outpatient providers, select outpatient primary care practices and some other health care providers. If you believe your setting should be eligible to order PPE and have not already been onboarded, email ppesupport@health.nyc.gov.

You can access the NYC PPE stockpile to support organizational daily needs to treat, manage and mitigate the risk of transmission of COVID-19. For-profit entities will be billed for the PPE they order. The NYC Health Department encourages providers to contact their usual suppliers for PPE and offers information on available suppliers. This information can be accessed by visiting nyc.gov/health/covidproviders and looking for **Personal Protective Equipment and Medial Supply Companies** under the “Infection Control and Personal Protective Equipment” drop-down menu.

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COVID-19 and Mental Health

Where can I find resources for patients who seem overwhelmed or distressed about being tested for, diagnosed with or otherwise affected by COVID-19?

For a list of mental health resources from the NYC Health Department, visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and click **Mental Health and Substance Use** on the left side of the page.

If a patient’s symptoms of depression or anxiety worsen or persist for longer than one month, consider referring them to a mental health professional.

- NYC Well is a free and confidential mental health support service that has trained counselors available 24/7 for counseling and referrals to care in over 200 languages. Call 888-NYC-WELL (888-692-9355), text "WELL" to 65173 or visit nyc.gov/nycwell. NYC Well’s App Library (nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/app-library/) has online emotional support tools.
- NY Project Hope’s Emotional Support Helpline has trained professionals that can provide support and referrals. Call 844-863-9314 between 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week.

What NYC mental health resources are available specifically for HCP?

See NYC Health Department mental health guidance and resources for HCP at nyc.gov/assets/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/emotional-well-being-hcw.pdf.

Additional resources can be found by visiting nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and clicking **Mental Health and Substance Use** on the left. Look for the Health Care and Essential Workers Resources section.

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Additional Information and Resources

- To subscribe to the Health Alert Network to receive public health information and updates, visit a816-healthpsi.nyc.gov/NYCMED/Account/HANSubscribe.
- To sign up to receive City Health Information bulletins via email, visit nyc.gov/health and search for **City Health Information**.
- NYC REACH can assist primary care practices with adopting and implementing health information systems, quality improvement and transformation initiatives. For information, visit nycreach.org.

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The NYC Health Department may change recommendations as the situation evolves.

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