

The **Thalidomide** Trust

Covid-19 August 2021 Q&A

Q: Can I Still Get Covid-19 After I've Had Two Vaccinations?

A: Yes, but the symptoms should be less severe and should hopefully mean you don't need to go into hospital.

Q: Are the Symptoms of Covid-19 Different if I've Been Vaccinated?

A: Yes. Before vaccination the main signs that you might have contracted Covid-19 were a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. If you have had both vaccinations, you may display different symptoms which are more like a summer cold. These symptoms in order of frequency include:

- Headache
- Sneezing
- Runny nose
- Sore throat
- Loss of smell
- Excessive tiredness

Q: What Precautions Should I Still Take?

A: Coronavirus remains a risk to your health. You should stay cautious to help protect yourself and others and to avoid the need to self-isolate:

- **Get vaccinated** if you haven't already. This is the best way to protect yourself.
- If you haven't had a vaccine yet, you can book one here:
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/coronavirus-vaccination/book-coronavirus-vaccination/>
- **Meet outside** or, if meeting inside, **open windows and doors** - this keeps the air flowing.
- If you think you have symptoms stay at home and **take a PCR test**. We explain about this later.
- **Wear face coverings** in crowded places and on public transport.
- Although touching surfaces is no longer thought to be the main way to become infected, it is still important to **keep surfaces clean** and to **keep washing your hands**.

Find out more information here: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/how-to-avoid-catching-and-spreading-coronavirus-covid-19/>

Q: Should I Still Be Meeting up With People?

A: Covid-19 rates remain high and especially with the highly infective delta variant. It is sensible - especially if you have underlying health conditions like diabetes or lung disease - to remain cautious.

Think about who you wish to meet up with, the risk and how to lower the risk. It is also worth thinking about your risk of being made to self-isolate as a result if someone you meet with develops the virus

Q: When Do I Need to Self-Isolate?

A: You have to self-isolate if you have symptoms of Covid-19 or have been a close contact of someone who has.

A close contact is defined as a person who has been close to someone who has had a positive test for Covid-19. Find out more information here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/self-isolation-and-treatment/when-to-self-isolate-and-what-to-do/>

The date your period of self-isolation starts will depend on whether the person you had contact with had symptoms or not. If they had symptoms, then has a test a day or so later – the 10 day period of self-isolation starts from the day they first showed symptoms. If they don't have symptoms, then the 10-day isolation period starts from the day they had the positive test.

Anyone who tests positive for Coronavirus will have to isolate regardless of whether they have had a vaccine or not.

Q: What Changes Are Coming in August?

A: From 16 August, if you're fully vaccinated, you will not need to self-isolate following close contact with someone who has Covid-19. However, you'll still need to take a PCR test and self-isolate if it's positive.

If you get your second dose of the vaccine just before, or just after, 16 August you'll need to wait two weeks for your second jab to take effect before you can enjoy these new freedoms. Find out more about the changes coming in here: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/explainers-52530518>

Q: What Is the Lateral Flow Test and When Do I Need One?

A: These are very quick tests we can do ourselves and are a guide as to how infectious we are to others. They are not tests to tell you if you have the virus. If you have symptoms of the virus, you need the PCR test.

Lateral flow tests are free from chemist. You can also order a lateral flow test here: <https://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests>. They can give a result within 30 minutes and do not need to be sent off to a lab.

Lateral flow tests are intended for picking up additional infected cases who would otherwise be missed because they don't have any symptoms.

Q: Are Lateral Flow Tests Accurate?

A: These tests are not as good as PCR tests for detecting Covid-19. They are a way of picking up a proportion of people who have no symptoms.

If these tests are negative, you may or may not be infected and you should continue to take the usual precautions such as hand washing, wearing a mask and social distancing. A negative lateral flow test should **not** be used to rule out infection.

Q: What Is the PCR Test and When Do I Need One?

A: A PCR test will tell you if you have the virus. They can detect very tiny amounts of the virus. If you have symptoms of Covid-19 or if you have tested positive on a lateral flow test, then you should take a PCR test to confirm whether you have Covid-19. Find out how to get a PCR test here: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>