

What happens after getting COVID? What do I need to know?

If you have COVID, it's nothing to be embarrassed about and you are not alone.

The new Omicron variant spreads easily between people. In the next few weeks, many more of us will become infected with COVID.

For more information on how you know you have COVID and what to do, visit: rebrand.ly/Feeling-Unwell.

When will I feel better?

Most people who have had 2 or more vaccine doses will recover from COVID in a few days. Remember that it is still important to self-isolate long enough to prevent infecting others, even if you feel better. To learn how long to self-isolate, see rebrand.ly/Feeling-Unwell.

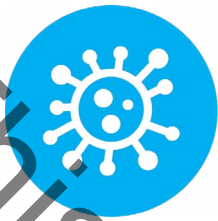
For a few people, symptoms may continue for several weeks. These might include:

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|--------------------|--------------------------|
| ✓ Cough | ✓ Loss of taste or smell |
| ✓ Chest discomfort | ✓ Feeling breathless |
| ✓ Feeling tired | ✓ Depression or anxiety |
| ✓ Headache | ✓ Digestive issues |

Call your doctor if your symptoms do not improve steadily or if they last longer than a month and make returning to your regular activities difficult. Your doctor may want to examine you or order some tests.

These longer-lasting symptoms can be frustrating, but the good news is that they usually get better with time.

This resource from the United Kingdom offers good advice on recovering from COVID and managing longer-lasting symptoms: <https://www.hacknecitizen.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/Post-COVID-19-information-pack-5.pdf>

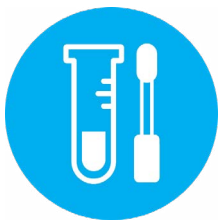


Can I get COVID again? Can I spread it to others?

Getting COVID temporarily protects you from getting it again. For most people this protection lasts 3 months, but it could be less for some people and more for others — it is impossible to predict exactly.

If you had COVID, you can get it again — and spread it to other people.

Even after you have recovered, it is still important to follow public health advice. Continue to wear a tight-fitting mask, keep at least 2 meters apart from others, limit your contacts, wash your hands often and avoid places with poor ventilation.



Do I need to test to make sure my infection is over?

Some workplaces or schools may require you to do a RAT (Rapid Antigen Test) if you are returning within 10 days of your symptoms starting.

Ten days after your symptoms started (or you took a test that came back positive), you will no longer be able to spread COVID to another person. **After 10 days, you do not need a Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) to confirm your infection is over.**

If your self-isolation is only 5 days, it is important that you continue to avoid people who are at high risk of serious illness from COVID until 10 days after your symptoms started.

PCR tests should not be used to confirm your infection is over. The PCR test is very sensitive. Even after recovering, you can test positive for several weeks.

You do not need a doctor's note to return to work or school.



Do I still need a booster shot? When should I get it?

Yes. Booster shots are key to stopping the spread of COVID. Research has shown that someone who had a COVID infection AND is vaccinated has stronger protection for a longer period of time than someone who had a COVID infection but no vaccine.

Three doses of a COVID vaccine provides more protection from infection and serious illness than two doses.

It is safe to be vaccinated as soon as your symptoms have gone away which will give you immediate protection. To get even stronger and longer-lasting protection, experts now recommend getting your 3rd dose 3 months after you got COVID (and ideally 6 months after your 2nd dose).



What about travel?

It is tricky to offer up-to-date advice about travel during the pandemic.

The rules around COVID and travel are changing all the time and the rate of infection and the ability of healthcare systems to keep up with the demands of COVID is different in each country. For the most up-to-date information, visit the Government of Canada website at: <https://travel.gc.ca/travel-covid>. Consider the testing requirements for arrival and departure at your destination and the rules for the airline you are travelling with.

If you need a PCR test for travel purposes, you will need to pay out-of-pocket at a private clinic.

It is good to have a plan in case you have to quarantine abroad or cannot return to Canada as scheduled.

Consider purchasing travel insurance for medical emergencies, including (but not only) COVID-related health problems.