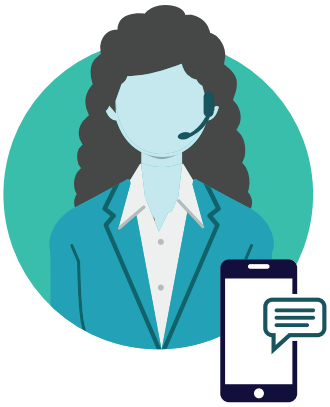
What is contact tracing?

Contact tracing is an important part of how public health responds and stops disease outbreaks. People who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are more at risk of getting infected and making others sick. Contact tracing is how public health workers find the close contacts of someone who has COVID-19.

How does contact tracing work?

Public health workers talk to people who have COVID-19 to find out who their close contacts are. The health department calls the close contacts and actively monitors them for symptoms, or checks to see if they get sick. They may also ask them to quarantine or self-isolate. The health department gives them important information about what they need to do next. They tell close contacts where to get tested or get medical care. They also tell them what to do to keep other people from getting sick.



Active monitoring

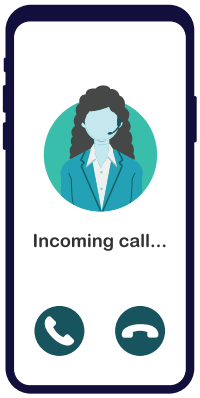
Active-monitoring is when someone from your local health department calls or texts you one time a day to check on you and ask you how you are feeling.

Contact tracing process

1 Jane and Dan were at the same birthday party.

2 A few days later, Dan gets symptoms of COVID-19. He gets tested. Dan tests positive for COVID-19.

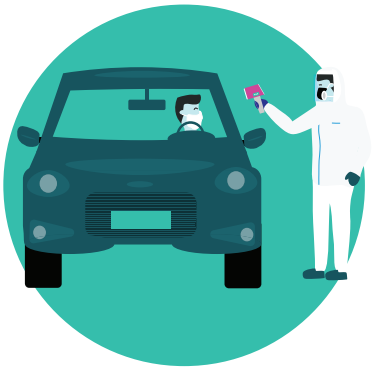
3 The health department works with Dan to find out the places he has been and who he has spent time with.



4 The health department calls Jane to tell her she may have been exposed to COVID-19. They tell her what she needs to do next.

What to do if you were exposed to COVID-19

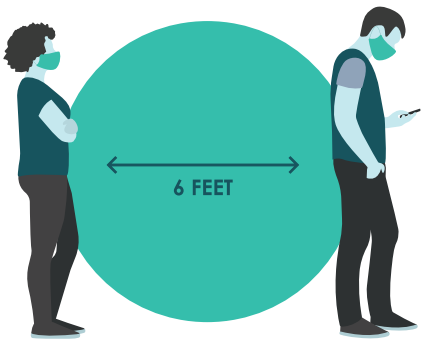
If the health department calls to tell you that you have been exposed to COVID-19, you need to quarantine. The health department may also ask you to get tested for COVID-19 even if you don't feel sick.



Get tested for COVID-19.

Leave your house only if you have to or to get medical care.

Limit the number of visitors to your home.



Try to stay at least 6 feet away from other people.

Clean surfaces that are touched often.

Wear a mask or face covering if you go out of your home or need to be around other people.