

The Vermont Department of Health has given the following reminders about close contact and the prevention of spreading COVID-19.

“Close contact means being within six feet for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, of someone who is diagnosed with COVID-19 during their infectious period. The infectious period starts two days before any symptoms began, or for people who haven't had symptoms, two days before they got tested, and continues until they are recovered. “Close contact does not mean: being more than six feet away in the same indoor environment for a short period of time, walking by, or briefly being in the same room.” (See examples at <https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/symptoms-sickness/close-contacts-contact-tracing>).

The following considerations are given for those who might have had a low risk encounter with an infectious person. It can take up to 14 days from the date of exposure to the virus for symptoms to show. The following actions help limit the spread of COVID-19.

- Upon close contact with someone outside of your usual social circle who might be infectious, please avoid close contact with others and consider getting tested.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Call your primary care provider if you have symptoms of COVID-19.
- Wear a mask in public when you cannot stay 6 feet apart from other people.
- Make sure you and members of your household wash their hands often using soap and water for 20 seconds.
- Make sure every member of your household covers their coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their elbow, and then washes their hands afterwards.
- Consider getting tested for COVID-19, even if you don't have symptoms. Learn more about getting tested in Vermont or contact your local health department for more information.

COVID-19 spreads mainly from having close contact with someone who has a COVID-19 infection. The virus is thought to spread by droplets from person to person when they speak, cough, or sneeze. Droplets travel less than 6 feet. When droplets from another person get in your mouth or nose you can inhale them into your lungs. This virus can be spread by people without symptoms.

As the state experiences a steady increase in cases, Vermonters are strongly urged to avoid unnecessary travel, including for the upcoming holidays, and avoid social gatherings with people you do not live with.