

What to Do When I Have Covid



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Part of responsible citizenship during a pandemic involves avoiding becoming infected (and likely spreading infection) as much as possible. It also involves having a plan in place in case we do get infected. Just like we're more likely to survive a fire or an earthquake if we've planned ahead for it (including gathering supplies, educating ourselves on risks and common mistakes, and developing protocols for ourselves and our families), we're more likely to have a mild experience with Covid if we plan ahead.

This document is meant to get you thinking about what *your* Covid+ plan might look like. It is just a starting point – you are encouraged to download this, modify it, check the contents against your own medical history and medications (especially in the case of contraindications), and run it by medical professionals, friends, and family members to get second, third, and fourth opinions. Everything written here is for informational purposes only – it is not medical advice. It is information for you to begin developing your own plan.

You are also encouraged to begin acquiring the supplies that will be needed in the case of Covid infection. Altogether, the items listed in this document are quite expensive and out of reach for many people. This economic precarity is unjust and intertwined with the same capitalist mode of production that has allowed for the pandemic to spread unchecked. I've linked to free resources at the end, but they do not cover everything.

If you see something in here that is incorrect or incorrectly cited, or if you would add something to this document, please email emily@cleanairclub.org. This document is best accessed on a desktop computer.

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My Covid+ Plan

Below is a sample Covid+ plan and protocol for what to do within the first hour, day, week, and beyond of testing positive for Covid. There are many things on here that may not apply to you; there are many things *not* on here that you may want to add. This is a starting point for you to begin building your Covid+ plan.

If I test positive for Covid-19, either on a rapid test or PCR, my plan is to:

1. Within the first hour:

- a. Isolate
- b. Mask (KN-95 or better)
- c. Open windows
- d. Turn on air purifiers
- e. Notify all household members
- f. Begin radical rest¹

2. Within the first day:

- a. Schedule same-day telehealth appointment (Obtain: prescriptions, letter for time off work or school)
- b. Contact tracing: notify all close contacts from prior week
- c. Cancel all social plans for the week
- d. Zoom chat with household members to discuss isolation plan, who will take on your household and care labor
- e. Begin medications²
- f. Arrange time off from work or school
- g. Schedule PCR test
- h. Turn on humidifier
- i. Begin tracking symptoms and test positivity³

3. During the First week:

- a. Continue radical rest
- b. Continue medications and symptom management
- c. Daily rapid test
- d. Continue tracking symptoms and test positivity

¹ Jamie Ducharme, "[Why You Should Rest - a Lot - If You Have Covid-19](#)," *Time Magazine* (Sep. 23, 2022).

² The medications you use to treat COVID and its symptoms will be specific to *you*; this may include a mix of prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, and herbal supplements. For more on this, see page 3, "My Covid+ Supplies."

³ See Symptom Tracker on page 5.

- e. Learn the signs of heart attack and stroke⁴

4. Until PCR negative:

- a. Continue radical rest
- b. Continue medications and symptom management
- c. Every other day rapid test
- d. Schedule weekly PCR test
- e. Continue tracking symptoms and test positivity

5. After PCR negative test (for one month or more)

- a. Schedule checkup and lab work⁵
- b. Refrain from moderate-to-vigorous exercise
- c. Take post-Covid medications for immune support, anti-clotting, and antiviral management
- d. Reflect on how the infection was acquired and make changes to covid-cautious strategies going forward⁶

⁴ See [here](#) for signs of heart attack and stroke.

⁵ See “Post-COVID Checkup and Bloodwork” on page 9 below.

⁶ See [here](#) for more info from The People’s CDC.

My Covid+ Supplies

Some of these supplies are easy to find; some are a bit harder. All of them are better obtained *before* you are positive for Covid. It is important to check the contraindications for everything you put in and on your body – adverse interactions can occur with other medications and pre-existing conditions. The below is a starting point for you to consider and research further in consultation with a medical professional.

1. Tools

- a. KN-95 Masks or better
- b. Air purifier
- c. Humidifier⁷
- d. Thermometer
- e. Pulse Oximeter
- f. Rapid Covid Tests
- g. Neti pot and Saline Packets⁸

2. Over the Counter Medications

- a. Ibuprofen
- b. Acetaminophen
- c. Expectorants, Flu meds
- d. Cough Drops
- e. Cetylpyridinium Chloride Mouthwash⁹

3. Prescription Medications

- a. Paxlovid¹⁰
- b. Metformin ER¹¹

4. Supplements

⁷ Jennifer Chu, "[Keeping indoor humidity levels at a 'sweet spot' may reduce spread of Covid-19](#)," *MIT News Office* (Nov. 16, 2022).

⁸ See Baxter, et al., "[Rapid initiation of nasal saline irrigation to reduce severity in high-risk COVID+ outpatients](#)," *Ear, Nose, and Throat Journal* (Aug. 25, 2022).

⁹ Found in many mouthwashes available at common pharmacies like Walgreens and CVS. For more info, see Takeda et al., "[Antiviral effect of cetylpyridinium chloride in mouthwash on SARS-CoV-2](#)," *Scientific Reports* (Aug. 18, 2022).

¹⁰ Paxlovid eligibility criteria [here](#).

¹¹ "Outpatient treatment with metformin reduced long COVID incidence by about 41%, with an absolute reduction of 4.1%, compared with placebo. Metformin has clinical benefits when used as outpatient treatment for COVID-19 and is globally available, low-cost, and safe." From [Bramante et al., "Outpatient Treatment of COVID-19 and Incidence of Post-COVID-19 Condition over 10 Months," *The Lancet* \(June 8, 2023\).](#)

- a. All herbal tinctures listed in Stephen Buhner's herbal protocol for acute covid infection¹²
- b. Melatonin¹³
- c. Lumbrokinase/Nattokinase¹⁴

5. Other

- a. Antiviral nasal spray¹⁵

¹² Stephen Harrod Buhner, *Herbal Antivirals: Natural Remedies for Emerging and Resistant Viral Infections*, 2nd ed., Workman Publishing Co. (2021). Important note: some of these tinctures reduce the efficacy of Paxlovid, and should not be taken simultaneously with it.

¹³ Faridzadeh et al., "[The role of melatonin as an adjuvant in the treatment of COVID-19: A systematic review](#)," *Helixon* (Oct. 2022).

¹⁴ See, e.g., Tanikawa et al., "[Degradative effect of Nattokinase on Spike protein of SARS-CoV-2](#)," *Molecules* (2022). Some people have found that this classification of medication interacts poorly with those who have connective tissue disorders.

¹⁵ See [this](#) roundup of nasal sprays shown to reduce transmission and severity of covid infection.

Covid+ Daily Symptom Tracking

It is very important to track your symptoms and positivity status throughout the infection. It will keep you and your doctors well-informed, it will help you track any Paxlovid rebound, and it will alert you to some emergent situations as early as possible.

	Rapid Test	PCR	Temp	O₂	Symptoms	Notes
Day 0						<i>This is the first day you test positive</i>
Day 1						
Day 2						
Day 3						
Day 4						
Day 5						
Day 6						
Day 7						
Day 8						
Day 9						
Day 10						
Day 11						
Day 12						
Day 13						
Day 14						
Day 15						
Day 16						
Day 17						
Day 18						
Day 19						

Covid+ Daily Symptom Tracking SAMPLE

	Rapid Test	PCR	Temp (F)	O ₂	Symptoms	Notes
Day 0	+		99	95	Sore throat	<i>First positive test; begin Paxlovid</i>
Day 1	+	+	100	96	Sore throat; congestion; fatigue; fever; flu-like symptoms; night sweats; chills	
Day 2	+		101	95	Sore throat; congestion; fatigue; fever; flu-like symptoms; night sweats; chills; brain fog	
Day 3	+		99	95	Fatigue; congestion; fever; flu-like symptoms; brain fog	
Day 4	+		98	95	Fatigue; congestion; brain fog	<i>Last day of Paxlovid</i>
Day 5	-		97	94	Fatigue; brain fog	
Day 6	-		97	95	Fatigue; brain fog	
Day 7	-	+	97	95	Fatigue	
Day 8	+		99	95	Fatigue; fever; flu-like symptoms; night sweats; chills; brain fog	<i>Paxlovid rebound</i> 😞
Day 9	+		100	95	Fatigue; fever; flu-like symptoms; night sweats; brain fog	
Day 10	+		100	95	Fatigue; fever; flu-like symptoms	
Day 11	+		99	95	Fatigue; fever	
Day 12	+		98	96	Fatigue	
Day 13	-		97	95	Fatigue	
Day 14	-	+	97	95	Fatigue	
Day 15	-		97	96	Fatigue	
Day 16	-		97	96	Fatigue	
Day 17	-		97	94		
Day 18	-	-	97	95		<i>First negative PCR test since infection</i> 😊

Medication Dose Schedule

It can be very hard to keep track of all the medications required during Covid and when to take each one, especially when they are on different dose schedules. A dose schedule, like the one below, is extremely helpful to have (both for yourself and for any caregivers that may be helping you through a covid infection). I've included a blank one for you to fill out as well as a sample one to see what a complete one can look like.

Time	General time of day	Medication	Dose
6 am	Before breakfast		
7 am			
8 am	Breakfast		
9 am			
10 am	Late morning		
11 am			
12 pm			
1 pm	Lunch		
2 pm			
3 pm			
4 pm	Late afternoon		
5 pm			
6 pm			
7 pm	Dinner		
8 pm			
9 pm	Before bed		
10 pm			

SAMPLE Dose Schedule

(This is a sample for informational purposes only; it is NOT your dose schedule.)

Time	General time of day	Medication	Dose
6 am	Before breakfast	Nettle tea Saline nasal rinse	1 cup
7 am			
8 am	Breakfast	Paxlovid Herbal tinctures Nasal Spray CPC Mouthwash	3 pills 1 tbsp 2 sprays 1 gargle
9 am			
10 am	Late morning	Nattokinase Take temperature Pulse oximeter reading	4,000/FU (titrate up to this)
11 am			
12 pm			
1 pm	Lunch	Herbal tinctures Nasal Spray CPC Mouthwash	1 tbsp 2 sprays 1 gargle
2 pm			
3 pm			
4 pm	Late afternoon	Nattokinase	4,000/IU (titrate up to this)
5 pm			
6 pm			
7 pm	Dinner	Herbal tinctures Paxlovid Nasal Spray CPC Mouthwash	1 tbsp 3 pills 2 sprays 1 gargle
8 pm			
9 pm	Before bed	Nasal Spray CPC Mouthwash Melatonin	2 sprays 1 gargle 3 mg

Post-COVID Checkup and Bloodwork

Covid infections damage the body. It is extremely important to get a new baseline for your health and to discover any changes to your health that should be addressed. The CDC [recommends](#) the following lab tests post-Covid:

Concern	Tests
Blood count, electrolytes, and renal function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete Blood Count with possible iron studies to follow ● Basic metabolic panel (calcium, carbon dioxide, chloride, creatinine with GFR estimated, glucose, potassium, sodium, BUN, BUN/Creatinine ratio) ● Urinalysis
Liver function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Liver function tests (albumin, globulin, albumin/globulin ratio, total bilirubin, ALP, ALT, total protein, LDH, PT, AST, GGT) ● Complete metabolic panel
Inflammatory markers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● C-reactive protein ● Erythrocyte sedimentation rate ● Ferritin
Thyroid function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TSH ● Free T₄
Vitamin deficiencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vitamin D ● Vitamin B12
Rheumatological conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Antinuclear antibody ● Rheumatoid factor ● Anti-cyclid citrullinated peptide ● Anti-cardiolipin ● Creatine phosphokinase
Coagulation disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● D-dimer ● Fibrinogen
Myocardial injury	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Troponin
Differentiate symptoms of cardiac vs. pulmonary origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● B-type natriuretic peptide

In addition to the recommended tests from the CDC, you may consider testing for:

- Cholesterol
- Glucose / Insulin
- Epstein-Barr reactivation

Free and Low Cost Resources

This will be updated as more information comes in.

1. Tests

- a. Each household can order 4 free Covid tests [here](#).
- b. You can order 6 free Covid tests through the NIH's "[Test to Treat](#)" program if you are uninsured or underinsured.
- c. Medicaid continues to cover 8 at-home rapid tests per month, as well as lab testing through Sep. 30, 2024.¹⁶
- d. Illinois households outside of Chicago can order 5 free Covid tests [here](#).
- e. The [CDC ICATT program](#) will continue to provide free Covid testing for people without insurance. Those testing locations can be found [here](#). You can also search [here](#) for community-based testing locations that may offer free tests.
- f. The website [RTMed](#) occasionally has very affordable tests and masks.

2. Medical Care

- a. Search online for a free clinic in your area. [Here](#) is a list of Chicago free clinics.
- b. The NIH's "[Test to Treat](#)" program offers free telehealth appointments for suspected covid and Paxlovid for diagnosed covid.

3. Masks

- a. [Project N95](#) provides free masks upon request. [Ending in 2023]
- b. There are also "Mask Blocs" in various cities around the U.S. that you can contact.¹⁷

4. Prescriptions

- a. It's always worth checking on [GoodRx](#) to see if you can get a discount on a prescribed medication.

5. Air Purification

- a. The cheapest way to improve your indoor air quality is to open the window. The second cheapest is to [build your own DIY air purifier](#). Thousands of people with no prior experience have done this during the pandemic to great success.

6. Medical Supplies

7. Finances

- a. Consider seeking aid for other life expenses so that you have funds available for non-covered medical expenses. This could include local food banks, tenant relief funds, local mutual aid organizations, and [cash assistance programs](#).

¹⁶ See [here](#) and [here](#).

¹⁷ This will be updated with links to them as I find them.