

..... FLATHEAD CITY-COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

COVID-19 Contact Tracing FAQs

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What is contact tracing?



Contact tracing is a process when public health staff work with a COVID-19 patient to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the time when they may have been infectious.

Close Contact:

Is defined as anyone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 48 hours before the person began feeling sick until the time the patient was isolated.

2 What happens during contact tracing?

Generally, contact tracing includes the following steps:

- Public health staff work with a patient to help them recall everyone with whom they have had close contact during the time when they may have been infectious.
- Public health staff begin contact tracing by notifying exposed individuals (contacts) of their potential exposure as rapidly and sensitively as possible, not revealing the infected patient's identity.
- Contacts are provided with education, information, and support to help them understand their risk, what they should do to separate themselves from others who are not exposed, and how to monitor themselves for illness.
- Contacts are encouraged to stay home, monitor their health, and maintain social distance (at least 6 feet) from others until 14 days after their last exposure to the infected patient, in case they also become ill.



What are close contacts expected to do?

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Close contacts are asked to stay at home and self-quarantine for 14 days, starting from the last day you were possibly exposed to COVID-19.

- Self quarantine means staying home, monitoring your health, and maintaining social distance from others at all times.
- You should take your temperature twice a day, watch for symptoms of COVID-19, and notify your health department if you develop symptoms.

Someone from the health department will call to check in on you daily during your self-quarantine period.



How will I know if I >>> am a close contact?

All close contacts are notified by a Flathead City-County Health Department staff member via phone call.

Please remember that if you have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19, you will be notified directly by the Flathead City-County Health Department.



What if I have been around someone who is identified as a close contact?

If you have been around someone who was identified as a close contact to a person with COVID-19, you do not need to self-quarantine. Monitor yourself for symptoms and continue to practice general social distancing and hygiene precautions.



What happens to personal information during contact tracing?

Discussions with health department staff are confidential. This means that your personal and medical information will be kept private and only shared with those who may need to know, like your health care provider.

Names will not be revealed to those you came in contact with. The health department will only notify your close contacts that they might have been exposed to COVID-19.