

Contact Tracing

The following was taken from a Missouri County Health Department Facebook posting; however, the MDA felt it was a good overview to better understand contact tracing and what counties do.

When a person in our county tests positive for COVID-19, we are notified by the Missouri State Department of Health and Senior Services. We then communicate with the positive person, and work with them to identify their close contacts. Those contacts are then notified and educated on how to prevent the spread of the illness.

The CDC currently defines a close contact as someone who was within six feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting 48 hours before illness onset.

- Examples of close contact are: members of the same household, riding in the same car as an infected individual, and sharing a room or meal with an infected individual.
- Examples of what is NOT considered a close contact are: passing someone in the grocery store, picking up a prescription from a pharmacist, and getting food from a drive-thru or curbside pick-up.

You can still be exposed to the virus during short interactions at less than six feet, but there is less likelihood.

If you are a close contact to a positive individual with COVID-19 and get tested, you must remember to quarantine for 14 days even if you have a negative result. A negative result means at the time you were tested, you were negative. You can still develop symptoms and become positive 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The decision to end the quarantine and self-isolation will be made in the context of local circumstances, and include factors such as symptoms, time elapsed, and test results.

We CANNOT, by law, share the identity of the infected individual with ANYONE unless the infected individual provides their written permission to do so.

It is important to continue to social distance and wear a face mask when close contact is unavoidable. Remember to frequently wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.

For more information, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/contact-tracing.html>.