

Student Health Services COVID-19 Terminology for The Claremont Colleges

Isolation: Isolation is used to separate known cases of COVID-19 (generally those who have had a positive test result) from others in the community to decrease spread/transmission of COVID-19. Isolation typically lasts for at least 10 days. You cannot test yourself out of isolation. Repeat COVID-19 testing is not recommended for 90 days from the time of diagnosis unless new symptoms appear after you have made a complete recovery from the initial infection.

(<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/covidisolation/>)

Quarantine: Quarantine is used to separate close contacts (see definition below) of a known COVID-19 case from others in the community until we can be certain that the close contact has not caused you to become infected with COVID-19 yourself. For unvaccinated individuals, quarantine typically lasts for 7-10 days. You are recommended to get tested 3-5 days after your last exposure to the known COVID-19 case. Testing earlier than Day 3 after exposure is generally not helpful because in the event you have become infected, the virus has not had enough time to incubate and replicate to a level detectable by the COVID-19 tests, even with sensitive tests such as PCR tests.

(<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/covidquarantine/>)

Modified Quarantine: Modified Quarantine was a term introduced on 8/6/21 by LA County Department of Public Health specifically for fully vaccinated students at Institutes of Higher Education who are identified as close contacts (see definition below) of a known COVID-19 case. These students are expected to quarantine until they receive a negative COVID-19 result from a test taken 3-5 days after their last known exposure to the confirmed COVID-19 case. As with Quarantine (above), testing earlier than Day 3 generally does not provide any benefit. In modified quarantine, students are allowed to stay in their regular residence and can leave quarantine only to attend class and academic activities, while consistently masked. However, each campus at The Claremont Colleges may choose to be more restrictive in how they implement modified quarantine, so please make sure to check with your Dean's office.

(http://www.publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/docs/protocols/ExposureManagementPlan_HigherEd.pdf, page 3)

Close Contact: Close contact is defined as: being within 6 feet of someone infected with COVID-19 during their infectious period for a total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period OR having unprotected contact with body fluids and/or secretions from someone with COVID-19.

(<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/acd/ncorona2019/covidisolation/>)

After learning that you've been exposed to the COVID-19, your initial reaction may be to rush out to get a test. Instead of dropping everything to get a same-day test, experts recommend waiting a bit before getting tested, because the virus may not be detectable in your system in the early stages. This corresponds to the incubation phase of the infection when the virus starts to replicate but remains

undetectable on testing. This is why it is recommended to test 3 to 5 days after your last exposure. An earlier test which comes back negative may give you a false sense of security even though you are infected and contagious.

Contact Tracing: Contact Tracing is an extremely important process in mitigating the transmission of COVID-19 in a population. Contact Tracers at The Claremont Colleges perform case investigations on all confirmed positive COVID-19 cases. Contact Tracers provide isolation instructions to the confirmed case and also check in with the case at least once daily to make sure they are doing okay. As a part of the case investigation, Contact Tracers identify who all may have been close contacts (see definition above) to the initial case. Contact Tracers then reach out to these close contacts and let them know if they need to go in to quarantine or modified quarantine. Contact tracers also let the close contacts know what day they should get tested based on the last known exposure to the initial case. Contact Tracers also let the cases & close contacts know when they can be released from isolation and quarantine, respectively. Contact Tracers stay in touch with campus liaisons, so the campus is aware of an individual's isolation or quarantine status. Finally, Contact Tracers stay in touch with County public health officials, as required by the Public Health Officer Order.

COVID-19 Testing through Student Health Services at The Claremont Colleges

Saliva PCR: This is the primary test being utilized by Student Health Services at our three testing sites. PCR testing is the most accurate methodology for detecting COVID-19 infection. Saliva collection has the advantage of being less invasive than the nasal swabs which are often used. The lab which processes these saliva samples is also located at The Claremont Colleges, thus reducing turnaround times for results to generally less than 24 hours from time of sample collection on the days the lab is operational. This test will be used for screening asymptomatic individuals as well as testing symptomatic students and close contacts of known positive cases.

Rapid Antigen: Rapid antigen testing is generally considered less accurate than PCR testing. Thus, its utility in detecting COVID-19 infection is limited to certain situations such as when the probability of one's symptoms being due to COVID-19 are very high to begin with, or when these less sensitive tests are used on a regular, repetitive basis. These tests are performed via a lower nasal swab and results come back in about 15 minutes. Given the limitations of these tests, they will only be performed in certain limited situations after consultation with a medical provider at Student Health Services

Nasopharyngeal PCR: This is the traditional deep nasal swab for COVID-19 testing. Since this method is more invasive, it is not used too often at this time at Student Health Services, except in some rare circumstances when determined by providers at Student Health Services.

