

# Apple, Google will warn you if you've been exposed to COVID-19

May 5 2020, by Jessica Guynn

---



Credit: CC0 Public Domain

Apple and Google, which control the world's most popular smartphone operating systems, gave a first look Monday at how public health apps will alert you if you've been exposed to the coronavirus.

The two [tech giants](#) have been working on new contact tracing tools for public health organizations that can tell you if you've crossed paths with someone who later tests positive for the deadly virus.

How it works: The new COVID-19 tools on iPhones and Android devices will use Bluetooth to sense nearby smartphones. When you've tested positive, you enter the test result into the app.

With your consent, anyone who was near you over the past 14 days will get a push notification that they have been potentially exposed: "You have recently come into contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. Tap for more information."

Public health authorities have used contact tracing for years to interview infected people, learn who they've been in contact with and advise them on what to do.

The smartphone version could help authorities more quickly lift social distancing constraints or respond to a new outbreak.

Participation is voluntary. Effectiveness of smartphone contact tracing hinges on how many people choose to use it.

Privacy advocates warn the technology being developed is potentially invasive and raises important questions of how to safeguard people's sensitive health information.

Apple and Google say they've taken precautions to make sure tracking data is anonymous and they say apps will not be permitted to track your specific location.

(c)2020 U.S. Today

Distributed by Tribune Content Agency, LLC.

Citation: Apple, Google will warn you if you've been exposed to COVID-19 (2020, May 5) retrieved 27 January 2023 from <https://techxplore.com/news/2020-05-apple-google-youve-exposed-covid-.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.