

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



COVID-19 Testing Overview

Updated Aug. 24, 2020 [Print](#)

[Find out who should get tested.](#) Protect yourself and others. Wear a mask, wash hands often, stay 6 ft from others.

Two kinds of tests are available for COVID-19: viral tests and antibody tests.

- A [viral test](#) tells you if you have a current infection.
- An [antibody test](#) might tell you if you had a past infection.



Coronavirus Self-Checker

A guide to help you make decisions on when to seek testing and appropriate medical care.

Considerations for who should get tested

- People who have symptoms of COVID-19
- People who have had close contact (within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes) with someone with confirmed COVID-19
- People who have been asked or referred to get testing by their healthcare provider, [local](#) [↗](#) or [state](#) health department

Not everyone needs to be tested. If you do get tested, you should self-quarantine/isolate at home pending test results and follow the advice of your health care provider or a public health professional.

How to get tested for current COVID-19 infection

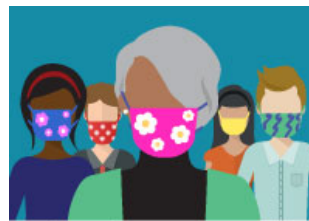
- You can visit your [state](#) or [local](#) [↗](#) health department's website to look for the latest

local information on testing.

- If you have symptoms of COVID-19 and want to get tested, call your healthcare provider first.

Results

- **If you test positive**, know what protective steps to prevent others from getting sick.
- **If you test negative**, you probably were not infected at the time your sample was collected. The test result only means that you did not have COVID-19 at the time of testing. Continue to take steps to **protect yourself**.



Find out what steps you can take to prevent the spread of COVID-19

Print Resources

HOW TO COLLECT YOUR ANTERIOR NASAL SWAB SAMPLE FOR COVID-19 TESTING

Initial set up

1. Open the swab kit.
2. Apply hand sanitizer and wash the swab.

Sample collection

1. Remove the swab from the package.
2. Insert the swab into your nostril and gently rotate it.
3. Insert the swab into your other nostril and gently rotate it.
4. Shyly back the swab into your nostril.

[PDF - 401 KB]

How to Collect Your Anterior Nasal Swab Sample for COVID-19 Testing

HOW TO COLLECT YOUR DEEP NASAL SWAB SAMPLE FOR COVID-19 TESTING

Initial set up

1. Open the swab kit.
2. Wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds.
3. Wash one hand with soap and water for 20 seconds.

Sample collection

1. Remove the swab from the package.
2. Insert the swab into your nostril and gently rotate it.
3. Insert the swab into your other nostril and gently rotate it.
4. Shyly back the swab into your nostril.

[PDF - 420 KB]

Testing Deep Nasal Self Swab

What Your Test Results Mean

If you test positive for COVID-19

TAKE STEPS TO HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF COVID-19

- STAY HOME** Do not leave your home, except for medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- GET TESTED AND STAY ISOLATED** Stay near the nearest healthcare, such as a long-term care, to help you isolate.
- STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR DOCTOR**
- ISOLATE YOURSELF FROM OTHER PEOPLE** At least 10 days after you start feeling better and away from other people until you are better.

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What Your Test Results Mean

Video Resources

Last Updated Aug. 24, 2020

Content source: National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases