

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)



COVID-19 Testing Overview

Updated Oct. 21, 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

[Click Here to Begin](#)

Considerations for who should get tested

- People who have symptoms of COVID-19.
- People who have had [close contact](#) (within 6 feet for a total of 15 minutes or more) 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 take 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 


Follow the instructions included with your sample kit. Use only materials provided in your kit to collect and store your sample, unless the kit says to do otherwise. Use only an approved sampling kit given to you by your healthcare provider or by personnel at the testing center.


Initial set up

1. Open the sampling kit.
2. Apply hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

Sample collection

3. Remove the swab from the container, being careful not to touch the soft end with your hand.
4. Insert the swab into your nostril. Do not insert it more than half an inch into your nostril.
5. Slowly twist the swab, rubbing it along the rim of your nostril for 15 seconds.


 [PDF - 401 KB]


[How to Collect Your Anterior Nasal Swab Sample for COVID-19 Testing](#) 

What Your Test Results Mean
Available: www.cdc.gov/nczod/dzdx/monitoring/rapid-testing.html

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 to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- STAY IN TOUCH WITH YOUR DOCTOR.**
- GET REST AND STAY HYDRATED.** Take over-the-counter medicines, such as acetaminophen, to help you feel better.
- SEPARATE YOURSELF FROM OTHER PEOPLE.** As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people and pets in your home.

 [PDF - PDF-215KB]

[What Your Test Results Mean](#) 

Video Resources

Last Updated Oct. 21, 2020

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