FAQs | Awaiting COVID-19 Test Results

Refer to information from your testing site on when and how to expect test results.

What should you do about work while you wait for test results?

- If you are experiencing symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 disease within the last 14 days, stay home while waiting for your test results. If applicable, notify your supervisor and note the date of testing.
- If you are not experiencing symptoms: Follow recommendations below to protect yourself. If you are a healthcare facility worker or first responder, request guidance from your supervisor on any potential work and patient care restrictions until you know your test results.
- Avoid using public transportation, ride sharing or taxis when commuting.

What should you do to protect yourself while you wait for test results?

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Clean your hands with an alcohol based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- If you are experiencing symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 disease within the last 14 days, stay home while waiting for your test results.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Clean all "high touch" surfaces every day. High touch surfaces include counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
- Cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or use the inside of your elbow.
- If available, wear a facemask if you are sick and distance yourself from other members of your household.

Monitor any symptoms:

- Note the day any new symptoms begin.
- Check your temperature two times a day.
- Keep a daily record of fever, cough and additional respiratory symptoms.
- Seek further evaluation from a healthcare provider via telemedicine or in person if your symptoms get worse. Call ahead before visiting your doctor and tell them you have been tested for COVID-19.
- Even if you don't experience symptoms, you might make others sick.

Seek medical attention immediately if you develop any of the following emergency warning signs for COVID-19 or other medical emergencies:

- Extremely difficult breathing
- Bluish lips or face
- Constant pain or pressure in the chest
- Severe constant dizziness or lightheadedness
- Acting confused
- Difficult to wake up
- Slurred speech (new or worsening)
- New seizure or seizures that won't stop.

This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

For medical emergencies, call 911 & notify the dispatch personnel that you may have COVID-19.

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If you test positive for COVID-19, keep your entire household home.

Most cases can be cared for at home.

- Do not go to the hospital to seek care unless you have a medical emergency.
- Do not go to work. Notify your employer of your positive test result.

Continue to monitor your symptoms at home as described on the opposite side.

What should you expect?

- Most people experience minor symptoms such as fever and cough.
- Over-the-counter medications that lesson symptoms of fever and cough may help. It is important to get rest and drink plenty of fluids.
- Think about anyone you were around for less than for 6 feet for more than 10 minutes in the 48 hours before your first symptom appeared. If you don't have symptoms, think about the people you were around in the 48 hours before your sample was taken.
- If possible, let those people know about their potential exposure and advise them to quarantine at home. Provide this information to Public Health if they contact you. Public Health will not share your name with those you came into contact with.

When does home isolation end?

- If you test positive for COVID-19, you must isolate at home for a minimum of 10 days after onset of symptoms.
- If asymptomatic at the time of testing, isolate at home for 10 days from the day of testing.
- You can be released from isolation if fever free (without fever-reducing medication) for at least 72 hours **AND**
- Improvement in other symptoms, whichever is longer.
- Note: Lingering cough, headache, fatigue and loss of taste or smell may persist for weeks or months and should not delay the end of isolation.
- Persons admitted to ICU or who are severely immunocompromised are considered infectious for a minimum of 20 days.

If you test negative for COVID-19:

- You are probably not infected at this time. However, you could have been exposed and test positive later. If you have a known exposure, you should finish your recommended quarantine period. Everyone should continue to practice all the protective measures to keep themselves and others safe.

- As long as the virus that causes COVID-19 is spreading in your community, continue to follow recommendations to protect yourself, including:

  - Practice social distancing, wash your hands often, avoid touching your face, and avoid social gatherings according to local guidance.

- Follow guidance from your healthcare provider and your state and local health departments.