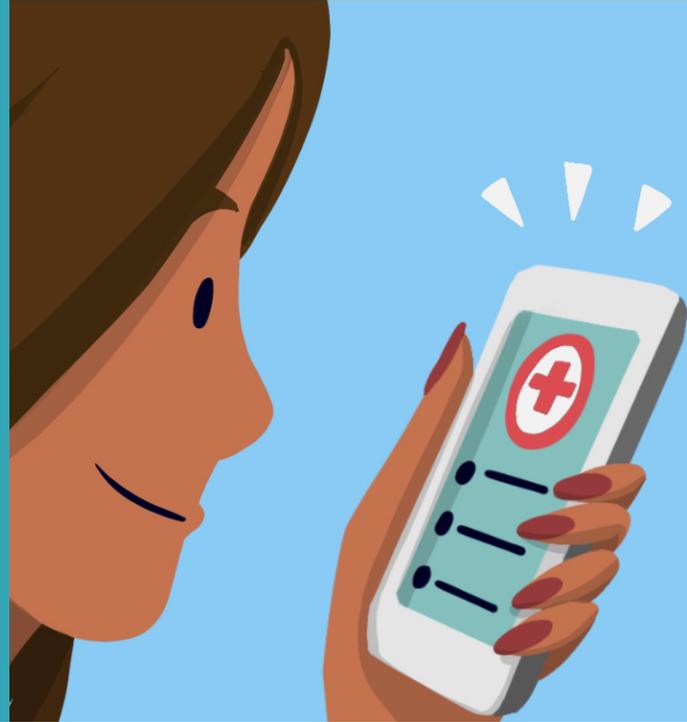


GETTING THE TEST:

STEP BY STEP GUIDE TO ASYMPTOMATIC TESTING



Getting a COVID-19 test and not sure what to expect? It is normal to feel anxious or unsure about testing. Our quick guide takes the mystery out of the process. Testing should be easy and painless. Here is what you need to know.

The following steps are meant for people who do not have any symptoms and have determined that it is time to get tested. Reasons to get tested include travel, having been at indoor gatherings or forgotten to mask up, or working closely with others. If you have symptoms or have come in close contact with someone recently diagnosed with COVID-19, please call your doctor or health department for specific instructions.

- 1 Find a testing site in your area.** COVID-19 tests are available for free nationwide at community testing sites, hospitals and health centers, and some stores and pharmacies. Many communities also offer pop-up testing clinics on specific days. Some employers and college campuses have started on-site screening testing for employees and students.

To find out what testing options are available in your area:

- Call your doctor or primary care office and ask about testing options
- Search the internet using the term “free COVID-19 testing near me”
- Visit your state or regional health department’s website and look for COVID-19 testing

information. Many states now have online screening forms that can get you pre-approved for asymptomatic testing.

- Visit [HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov) and click on Community Based Testing Sites
- Call a local pharmacy or health center in your area and ask for help finding a free testing site

Make sure the testing site offers diagnostic tests, which tell if you have an active COVID-19 infection. There are two categories of diagnostic tests: molecular (or PCR) tests and antigen tests. Both are safe and easy to administer.

Note: There is still confusion about who should get tested. If a site tells you they only test people with symptoms, try a different one.

- 2 Make an appointment.** Many testing locations require making an appointment ahead of time, either online or by phone. How soon you get an appointment depends on the regional demand for COVID-19 testing, so book in advance. Be prepared to submit basic contact information and answer simple questions about your health. In most parts of the U.S., you do not need to pay for an asymptomatic COVID-19 test, even if you are uninsured. It’s best to confirm this when making an appointment

- 3 Plan ahead.** After booking your appointment, look up the address to make sure you know how to get

to the testing site. If taking public transit, check bus and train schedules and determine how much time you'll need for travel. Some testing sites may be outside, so check the weather and dress appropriately.

If you booked an appointment online, check for a confirmation email and review it for any special instructions.

4 Arrive at the testing location: Depending on where you live, testing sites generally fall into these categories:

■ **Drive-through sites** allow you to stay in your car for the duration of the testing process.

■ **Walk-up (or pop-up) sites** are outside, usually in a convenient part of town. People walk through the different stations of the test.

■ **On-site testing** involves being tested inside a health clinic, pharmacy, or another facility.

After arriving, look for people or signs directing you where to go next. To protect yourself, other patrons and health workers, you should keep your mask on at all times until instructed otherwise.

5 Get swabbed: Diagnostic tests work by analyzing samples taken from your nose, mouth, or throat.

During the test, a health professional will swab the inside of your nose, your throat, or cheek. This is a quick and painless process. In some cases, a deeper swab from the very back of the nose is taken, but this way of testing is becoming less common for asymptomatic tests. Sometimes, people will be asked to collect the sample themselves while a health professional observes. This helps to reduce close contact between people.

Some of the newer tests only need a saliva sample, which involves spitting into a container or taking a mouth swab, and can be administered at home.

6 Get your results: Certain tests produce results in as little as a few minutes to a few hours. Other tests take up to a few days to process. If you are not informed immediately, staff will email, call you or ask you to check an online portal to get your results. Labs prioritize positive results and will attempt to reach those people as soon as possible, so be sure to answer any unknown phone calls.

If you need to wait for results and continue to not have any symptoms, you can go to work or school and continue with regular activities as advised during the pandemic. It is crucial that we all continue to practice everyday prevention measures, such as proper handwashing, physical distancing, and mask-wearing.

7 What if you test positive?

If you test positive, someone from the health department or doctor's office will call you and give you specific instructions. Remember that between 20 and 40 percent of people who test positive for COVID-19 never develop symptoms, and of those who do develop symptoms, most have a mild illness and can recover at home without medical care. If you test positive, it is vital that you stay at home and separate yourself from anyone you live with. Please also help your health department figure out who else might have been infected by answering questions about people you have come close to recently.

#TakeTheTest

Make your voice heard! Share your testing experience on social media