



COVID-19 At-home Testing

COVID-19 at-home diagnostic testing (also called self-testing) allows some or all parts of the testing process to take place at home. With some at-home tests, you collect a nasal or saliva sample and send it to a laboratory. Other tests allow you to test the sample yourself, with results available in minutes.

If you need to be tested for COVID-19 and cannot be tested by a health care provider, consider at-home testing. **Note:** At-home test results may not be accepted for some purposes, such as school, employer or travel testing requirements.

Tips for Performing an At-home Test

- Read the manufacturer's instructions carefully and view any online instructional videos provided by the manufacturer **before** beginning the test.
- Closely follow the manufacturer's instructions. If specimens are not collected, handled or stored exactly as written in the instructions, your test result may not be correct.
- Before and after testing, wash your hands with soap and water and disinfect the table or other surface where you are performing the test.
- Do not open test kits until you are ready to start. Check the expiration date. Do not use expired tests or test components that are damaged or discolored.
- Read the test result within the amount of time written in the manufacturer's instructions. A result read before or after the stated timeframe may not be correct.
- Do not reuse test kits or components.

Interpreting Test Results

At-home testing may be less accurate than tests performed by a health care provider. For this reason, there are times when you should follow up with your provider and arrange for another COVID-19 test to confirm your at-home test result (a confirmatory test, such as a molecular [PCR] or antigen test). For more information, see the table on the following page.

Additional Resources

- Learn about COVID-19 treatment options at nyc.gov/health/covidtreatments. Treatment works best the sooner you start – call your provider right away if you test positive.
- If you test positive for COVID-19 or were recently exposed, the NYC Test & Trace Corps can provide resources to help you separate from others in a free hotel room or at home. Call 212-COVID19 (212-268-4319) and select option 5 after choosing your language or visit nychealthandhospitals.org/test-and-trace.
- For more information on COVID-19 at-home testing, including videos on how to use and interpret home self-test kits, visit cdc.gov and search for **Self-Testing**.
- For information on quarantine and isolation, visit nyc.gov/preventcovid and click on **COVID-19: Understanding Quarantine and Isolation**.

- For more information on COVID-19 tests, visit nyc.gov/health/coronavirus and click on **Testing**. To find a testing site, many of which are no cost, visit nyc.gov/covidtest.

At-home Test Result		What to Do
If you test positive		Stay home (isolate) for 10 days, call your provider to discuss treatment options, and inform your close contacts ¹ so that they can quarantine, if necessary, and get tested. Your provider may suggest you get a confirmatory test.
If you test negative	If you have COVID-19 symptoms ²	Isolate and get a confirmatory test.
	If you have recently been exposed to someone with COVID-19 and do not have symptoms	If you are not fully vaccinated , ³ quarantine for 10 days. You may quarantine for seven days if you get a negative test result from a confirmatory test taken at least five days after your last exposure or a second at-home test. If using two at-home tests, the first test must be performed at least five days after your last exposure. The second test must be performed 24 hours after the first test (or longer based on the manufacturer’s instructions). If you are fully vaccinated ³ or recovered from COVID-19 in the past three months, ⁴ no further action is needed, but if you develop symptoms, get tested again.
	If you have no symptoms and have not recently been exposed to someone with COVID-19	No further action is needed.
If you have an invalid result or testing error		Follow the manufacturer’s instructions; seek another test if you have COVID-19 symptoms or have been exposed to someone with COVID-19.

¹ Close contacts are people who have been within 6 feet of you for 10 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, starting two days before your symptoms began or, if you had no symptoms, two days before the day of your positive COVID-19 test result.

² Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting and diarrhea.

³ Fully vaccinated means at least two weeks have passed since receiving the second dose of a two-dose vaccine (such as Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) or since receiving a single-dose vaccine (such as Johnson & Johnson/Janssen).

⁴ This applies to anyone who had confirmed COVID-19 (meaning they had a positive diagnostic test) in the past three months and recovered. Three months is measured from the date a person first had COVID-19 symptoms or, if they had no symptoms, the date of their first positive diagnostic test.