

At-Home COVID-19 Tests

At-home COVID-19 tests show if you have an active COVID-19 infection. When you use an at-home test, you collect your own sample from your nose or throat. The test is processed at home and will get results at home in less than an hour.

COVID-19 test results are most accurate when you are tested by a health care provider or at a community testing site, but you may choose to use an at-home test when these other options are not available to you.

You can get an at-home test from a health care provider, or you can purchase at-home tests over-the-counter at a pharmacy or retail store. If you choose to take an at-home test, carefully follow all instructions provided by the manufacturer.

At-Home COVID-19 Test Results

Unlike tests performed by a health care provider or through a community testing site, **not all at-home test results are automatically reported to your doctor and public health.**

It is important to report your test result to your doctor or a health care provider, whether it is positive or negative. Depending on what your result is and if you have COVID-19 symptoms, you may need to get another COVID-19 test from a health care provider or at a community testing site.

At-home COVID-19 tests are not supervised by a health care provider and are not sent to a lab for processing. This is why at-home tests cannot be used to inform any official public health decisions.

- A negative at-home test result **will not be accepted as a way to shorten quarantine.**
- A positive at-home test result will **not be referenced to identify a 90-day period of possible immunity** which would make you exempt from quarantine if you had close contact with someone with COVID-19.
- At-home tests **cannot be used to enter or return to the U.S. when traveling from an international location.**

What do my at-home COVID-19 test results mean?

If your test results are positive and reported to public health, you may receive information from a contact tracer about how to monitor your illness and how to prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.

If your test results are negative or are not reported to public health, you will likely not be contacted about what to do with your test results.



It is important to take steps to help stop the spread of COVID-19 by following [isolation and quarantine guidance](#).

I tested positive.

It's possible you have COVID-19.

- Self-isolate and notify your close contacts.
- Contact your health care provider or local or tribal health department. They may recommend you get another test from a health care provider or at a community testing site.

I tested negative. I do not have symptoms, but I had close contact with someone with COVID-19.

You likely do not have COVID-19 at this time.

- Continue to quarantine at home and monitor for symptoms.
- If you develop symptoms, get another COVID-19 test from a health care provider or at a community testing site.

I tested negative, but I have symptoms of COVID-19.

It's possible you have COVID-19.

- Self-isolate at home.
- Contact your health care provider or local or tribal health department. They may recommend you get another test from a health care provider or at a community testing site.

I tested negative. I do not have symptoms and I did not have a close contact.

You likely do not have COVID-19 at this time.

- You do not need to isolate or quarantine or get another test.
- If you are using the test result for the purpose of shortening quarantine or clearance for travel, you will need another test from a health care provider or community testing site.

Why is it recommended that I get another COVID-19 test?

Collecting your own sample and performing a test at home can increase the chance of receiving an inaccurate result. Although at-home COVID-19 tests are convenient and can provide quick results, a second test from a health care provider or at a community testing site is often necessary to confirm your test result.

At-home collection kits are another type of COVID-19 test where you collect your own sample at home. However, you must send your sample to a lab for processing and you will get your results in 1-3 days. At-home collection with sample collection not supervised by a health care provider cannot be used for official public health decisions. **The State of Wisconsin and Vault Medical Services have teamed up to provide at-home collection kits to everyone who lives in Wisconsin, at no cost. Sample collection is supervised over a video call by a health care professional, and therefore can be used to inform official public health decisions. [Request an at-home collection kit.](#)**