

At-Home COVID-19 Testing

There are two types of self-testing options authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA):

1. **At-home self-collection** devices, which allow an individual to collect a specimen at home and ship it to a certified lab for analysis (requires a prescription)
2. **At-home self-tests**, which allow an individual to test and obtain a result for a self-collected specimen at home. (no prescription required)

This guidance focuses only on at-home self-tests.

*It is important to know that results from at-home self-test devices might not be accepted for certain purposes, such as documentation for ending quarantine, before a medical procedure, or prior to air travel. If a test result is required for a specific purpose, please check with the entity requiring it (for example, the airline or the healthcare facility) to see whether an at-home self-test would be acceptable. **At-home self-test are not reportable to DHEC and may not be used to verify infection to prevent future quarantine in the next 90 days if exposed.***

What if your test is positive?

If you have symptoms or have had a recent contact with someone with COVID-19, a positive test result means you have COVID-19. You should immediately isolate following [CDC](#) and [DHEC guidance](#). Isolation means you should stay home and away from others, even inside your home. Generally, you need to stay in isolation until:

- Your symptoms are better – AND
- At least 5 days have passed since your illness started – AND
 - If you come out of isolation at 5 days you must wear a well-fitting mask days 6-10 when not at home
- You have no fever for at least 24 hours without using fever-reducing medication

You should also notify anyone you have recently been in close contact with to let them know you tested positive for COVID-19. There are tools available to assist you on the [DHEC website](#) and you may notify your contacts anonymously, using [TellYourContacts.org](#).

If you have worsening symptoms, you should contact your healthcare provider.

If you have no symptoms and no recent contact with someone with COVID-19, a positive test result might mean you have COVID-19 or it might be a false positive. You should immediately isolate and consider contacting your healthcare provider to determine if you should receive a repeat test or [find a testing location](#) where you can get a PCR COVID-19 test. If you do not obtain a repeat COVID-19 test within two days following your at-home self-test, you should continue to follow isolation guidance and steps above.

Is repeat testing at a clinic location or with a healthcare provider necessary after a positive at-home self-test result?

Those who test positive via an at-home COVID-19 self-test kit are encouraged to follow DHEC's [guidance for a case](#). Results from at-home COVID-19 self-test kits may not be accepted for certain purposes, such as documentation for ending quarantine, before a medical procedure, or prior to air travel. If a test result is required for a specific purpose, please check with the entity requiring it (for example, your school or workplace, the airline or healthcare facility) to see whether an at-home self-test would be acceptable.

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What if your test is negative?

If you do not have symptoms and have not had close contact with someone with COVID-19, a negative test means that you probably do not have COVID-19. You should continue to take precautions: wear a mask, distance 6 feet apart from people outside of your household, and wash your hands or use hand sanitizer.

If you have symptoms or close contact to someone with COVID-19, and you have a negative result, you should continue to stay home and away from others and contact your healthcare provider to determine if you should obtain a repeat test in case your at-home self-test result is not accurate. A PCR test or proctored rapid test at a clinic location or with a healthcare provider may be recommended for you to determine if your illness is caused by COVID-19.

What if your results are invalid?

If your at-home self-test shows an error or invalid result, refer to the instructions in the package insert and contact the manufacturer for assistance. You may consider finding a nearby [testing location](#) or repeat the at-home test using a new at-home self-test device.

Test Disposal

After you obtain your results, discard your at-home self-test as described in the disposal instructions in the package insert. You cannot reuse test devices or other components. Most test kits can be disposed of in the general trash, but some kits contain batteries that have specific disposal instructions.

Sharing your results

If your at-home self-test was positive and your symptoms remain mild, you should [isolate](#) and [notify your contacts](#) of your positive test, but it is not required to contact your health care provider or health department. There are tools available to assist you in notifying your contacts anonymously, such as [TellYourContacts.org](#). If you have worsening symptoms, you should seek medical care through your healthcare provider.

What if you are Up To Date (UTD)* in your vaccines for COVID-19?

If you are UTD and

- have no symptoms of COVID-19, you do not need to test.
- have been exposed to someone with COVID-19 you should seek testing at least 5 days after the exposure and wear a mask while indoors in public places for 10 days or until a negative test result is received.
- have symptoms of COVID-19, you should stay home away from others, consult your healthcare provider and be tested.

More information for fully vaccinated individuals can be found on the [CDC website](#).

**UTD means received 2 doses of Pfizer or Moderna or 1 dose of Janssen vaccine plus a booster dose if you are due for one: 5 months after Pfizer or Moderna, or 2 months after Janssen*