Coronavirus Disease 2019

Ohio | Department of Health

COVID-19 Testing Guidance for Physicians

Protecting Against COVID-19

Who can get tested?

The State of Ohio has given health care organizations guidance that allows them to order a test for anyone who wants a test, but some testing sites may have restrictions. Under our guidelines, it doesn't matter if a person has been exposed, is at higher risk, or showing no symptoms, anyone can get a test. But it's also not a mandate that testing locations follow this guidance.

Testing standards differ among organizations and businesses. Many retail pharmacy locations, doctor's offices, and community health centers will screen an individual before they order or perform a test. They may ask if a person has symptoms or if they're part of an at-risk population. It's important that providers share their procedures and standards, including minimum age for testing, insurance requirements, and other order requirements.

Do we need to write an order for a patient?

A provider's order is required for all tests. The state allows providers to place a testing order for anyone who wants a test.

At the pop-up sites operated by the state, the tests are open to anyone and we will place the order on-site.

Privately-run sites may have different standards and requirements for testing. But typically, they will create the order on-site if a person has symptoms, is in an at-risk population, or has been exposed to the virus. In other cases, they might require you to write an order for a patient- like you would for an x-ray.

Where can patients get tested if they can't at our location?

There are many locations around the state where they can be tested. Visit coronavirus.ohio.gov and click on the "Testing and Community Health Centers" tab. A map identifies more than 500 testing locations throughout the state. These locations are a combination of state-sponsored pop-up's and private testing sites. Cards on the map include contact information for most locations.

When a patient or your staff visits the map to make a location recommendation, they can search by zip code and identify a pop-up location by its yellow pin. They can also visit: https://coronavirus.ohio.gov/wps/portal/gov/covid-19/resources/general-resources/get-tested-for-covid-19-infographic. We continue to increase pop-up sites across the state, especially in areas that show an increase in cases, and continually update the list of available testing locations.

What happens at a pop-up site? How does it work?

Pop-up testing is focused on underserved areas, particularly minority communities, and communities that have seen a recent increase in their infection rate. Anyone can go on the day assigned to a community and get tested. They do not need a doctor's order ahead of time and they do not need to show symptoms.

Pop-up testing locations are one of the most convenient ways to get tested. A person can walk up, drive up, or in some cases park their car and get tested. The state continues to increase our pop-up locations.

Because some of these sites have experienced high demand for testing, we encourage individuals to make an appointment if that option is available. Appointments are not required.

In many cases, the testing site will have three stations. At the first station, a person is evaluated for symptoms. The second station will have an individual fill out any paperwork needed to complete the testing, including a lab registration form. When they get to the third and final station, they'll be given the test. Lab results will be sent to the individual's provider.

How can we tell if it's a state-sponsored testing site?

All pop-up locations indicated on the testing map on the coronavirus.ohio.gov website are state-sponsored. You can find these locations by looking for the yellow pin on the website map.

What types of tests are available?

There are several different types of tests available. Which one a person receives may depend on where they go. The state-sponsored pop-ups use nasal pharyngeal swabs to test for COVID-19. Other locations may use a standard nasal swab or take a saliva sample.

Will they have to administer the test themselves?

Self-administered tests are used at some locations. These tests are administered under the supervision of a trained professional to ensure that they are done properly and give the test the best chance of producing reliable results.

For more information, visit: **coronavirus.ohio.gov**

Does an individual have to pay for their own test?

State testing sites provide testing with no out-of-pocket costs. However, the state does bill Medicaid or insurance if a person has either type of coverage. The state or federal government will cover the costs for those who are uninsured. While this may be the case at many other testing sites the state cannot guarantee that all privately run testing sites will test without charging the patient.

How long does it take to get lab results?

If you're a provider that's testing, you most likely have the best pulse on your turnaround time. At the state level, we've noticed that the current turnaround rate on a test depends on where an individual has the test done. The time frame varies from 48 hours to 6-7 days. However, in many areas, increased testing demand has led to longer turnaround times for the labs that process tests. Sharing turnaround time with your patients is important.

What should patients do while waiting for their results?

Self-isolate in their home. If they live with others, self-isolate in a private room and use a private bathroom, if possible. They should wear a mask if they need to be with others.

What happens if one of your patients has a positive test?

The local health department will provide guidance on how to stay safely at home to avoid spreading illness. A contact tracer also may reach out to the patient to ask about other people who they've spent time with. This person's role is strictly to map the virus and will only ask questions about recent contacts to help identify the virus' path.

If a patient does not test positive but has been in contact with a person who is positive, the local health department will most likely recommend that the patient also stay safely at home and monitor for symptoms.

What happens if one of your patients has a negative test?

If they are a close contact of a confirmed case, they should continue to isolate until 14 days after their exposure.

If they tested negative, do not have symptoms, and were not in close contact with a confirmed case, they can stop isolating.

If they tested negative, and do have symptoms, and were not in close contact with a confirmed case, they should avoid other people until three days after the last day of your respiratory symptoms and fever.

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov

For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 Care Line at 1-800-720-9616.

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019

Ohio | **Department of Health**

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

PREVENTION

For additional information call **1-833-4-ASK-ODH** or visit **coronavirus.ohio.gov.**

STAY HOME EXCEPT FOR WORK AND OTHER NEEDS

WEAR A FACE COVERING WHEN GOING OUT

PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING OF AT LEAST 6 FEET FROM OTHERS

SHOP AT NON-PEAK HOURS

WASH HANDS OFTEN WITH WATER AND SOAP (20 SECONDS OR LONGER)

AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH WITH UNWASHED HANDS OR AFTER TOUCHING SURFACES

COVER YOUR MOUTH WITH A TISSUE OR SLEEVE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING

CLEAN AND DISINFECT "HIGH-TOUCH" SURFACES OFTEN

DON'T WORK WHEN SICK

CALL BEFORE VISITING YOUR DOCTOR

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov