

On behalf of NHS Test & Trace - Latest guidance on Covid-19 testing

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To stop the spread of the virus remember - Hands. Face. Space: wash your hands regularly, use a face covering when social distancing is not possible and try to keep your distance from those not in your household.

There is now very high demand for coronavirus tests and it is vital we test people with symptoms to help stop the spread of the virus.

If you have covid symptoms, you must get a test.

If you don't have symptoms, don't get a test.

We all need to play our part to protect the NHS Test and Trace service for those who really need it.

A recent survey at testing sites found a quarter of people turning up did not have symptoms. If you don't have coronavirus symptoms, and have not been advised to take a test by a doctor or a public health professional or by your local council, you should not be booking a test.

If you have any coronavirus symptoms you must isolate immediately for 10 days (don't wait for a test or a test result before doing so)

If you are identified as a contact of a positive case you must isolate for the full 14 days (even if for some reason you got a negative test during that period)

You should NOT get tested:

If you have returned from abroad or are about to travel, you are returning to the workplace, you have been in contact with a confirmed case or if another member of your household has symptoms. You may be advised to isolate if you have been in contact with a confirmed case but you should only get a test if you have symptoms.

By following these simple rules, we can ensure people who need a test can get one.

When to get a test or not:

- Only get a test if you have coronavirus symptoms or have been asked to get tested by a doctor or a public health professional or by your local council. The main symptoms of coronavirus are **a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste**. Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.
- Do not use this service to get a test in order to travel to another country. We do not provide certificates for travel purposes. You can pay for a private test.

- If your employer, school, or travel company has asked for evidence of a negative coronavirus test result, we are unable to provide this service. You should only get tested if you have symptoms.
 - If someone in your household starts to have symptoms, then they must get tested and the rest of your household should self-isolate with them whilst they wait for the results. If you or other members of the household don't have symptoms, then you should not get a test – only people with symptoms should get tested. Most people who are tested in person get their results the next day. [Full guidance on self-isolation is available on gov.uk](#).
 - If you have been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus you should not get tested unless you have coronavirus symptoms. A negative test result does not change the period of time that you will be required to self-isolate.
 - If you have been abroad and are quarantining, you should not get tested unless you have coronavirus symptoms. A negative test result does not change the period of time that you will be required to quarantine.
- Do not stockpile tests. If you develop symptoms in future you will be able to book a test. There is no need to order a test in case of future use.
- If you have symptoms and need to book a test, you can do this online or by ringing 119. Do not call 111 which is an urgent care service and cannot help with tests.

For organisations and employers:

- **Schools:** please follow the official [guidance on testing](#). It is very important that this guidance is followed. Schools should not advise pupils or teachers to take a test unless they exhibit one or more of the listed symptoms. If there is a confirmed case then schools should not advise entire classes or year groups to get tested. Only those with symptoms or those advised by their clinician or Local Authority should get a test. Schools must not require students without symptoms to provide evidence of a negative test before letting them back to school.
- **Employers:** you should not be asking members of staff to get tested before they come into the workplace. You can also help by communicating the guidance around testing to your staff.
- **Travel companies:** you should not be directing clients to NHS Test and Trace to get a test for anything related to overseas travel.

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