



Sioux Lookout
First Nations
Health Authority

CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

COVID-19 TESTING

JULY 15, 2020

WHAT IS THE TEST FOR COVID-19?

- The preferred test for COVID-19 is called a nasopharyngeal (NP) swab. It is like an extra-long Q-tip - a long narrow “stick” with an absorbent material on the end.
- Other tests include deep nasal swab or viral throat swabs



HOW IS THE TEST FOR COVID-19 DONE?

- The test is done by sticking the swab in one nostril and gently moving it to the very back of the nose. It is not painful but can be uncomfortable.

WHO NEEDS TO BE TESTED FOR COVID-19?

- People who have symptoms of cough, fever (37.8°C or higher) shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose or sneezing, nasal congestion, hoarse voice, trouble swallowing, change in sense of smell
- Elders or children who have some of the symptoms of COVID-19 that are not the usual symptoms (like unexplained tiredness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chills, headaches)
- People who have been in close contact with someone who has been diagnosed/tested positive for COVID-19.
- People who have visited institutions or congregate care settings experiencing a COVID-19 outbreak
- Anyone who is concerned that they may have COVID-19 and wish to be tested



Close contact is 15 minutes or greater less than six feet apart, intimate contact, or sharing a living space.

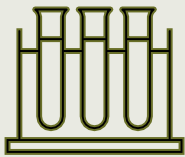


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WHY AREN'T WE TESTING EVERYONE?



- When the viral activity is low, testing everyone is not helpful as most tests will be negative. Negative tests give a false sense of reassurance and interfere with people carrying out physical distancing.

DO I NEED TO SELF-ISOLATE TO WAIT FOR MY TEST RESULT?

- It depends on the reason for your test. If you do NOT have symptoms, have NOT travelled outside of your community, and have NOT been in contact with someone with COVID-19 you likely do not need to isolate, you should self-monitor and if you have any symptoms you should be assessed.
- If you have symptoms, have travelled outside your community in the last 14 days, or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 you will need to self-isolate



HOW DO I FIND OUT MY TEST RESULT?

- You will be notified by a health worker in your community (doctor, nurse, etc.)
- The time it takes to be notified depends on your risk level and the logistics around getting the test to the lab. It could be within 2 days, or it may take up to 5 days. In rare circumstances it may take up to two weeks.
- You can get your results if you know your Health Care number and have access to a computer and the internet



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WHAT DOES A POSITIVE TEST MEAN?



- A positive test means that the test has detected COVID-19 virus in your swab.
- If you have symptoms, you should get yourself assessed at the nursing station as soon as possible.
- If you have no symptoms isolate at home or in an isolation.
 - If you are at home, stay in a separate room away from other people in your home and use a separate bathroom, if possible.
 - If that is not possible, you will need to keep at least 2 metres distance between you and other people in your household and shared areas in your house will have to be disinfected after you use them (e.g. bathroom, kitchen). You may be asked to go to another location in the community to isolate.
 - Wear a mask as much as possible when you are around others in your home
 - Continue to wash your hands with soap and water for 20 seconds often, especially after touching your face.
 - .
- A public health nurse will ask you the names of everyone you came into close contact with from 48 hours before you developed symptoms or from when your specimen was collected if you did not have symptoms. This will help your close contacts get tested and treatment if needed, as well as help stop the spread of COVID-19 to others.
- You will be contacted by a nurse daily for 14 days to follow up on your symptoms.



SELF-ISOLATE

SYMPTOMS MAY TAKE UP TO



14 DAYS

to appear after
exposure to
COVID-19



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WHAT DOES A NEGATIVE TEST MEAN?



- If you test negative for COVID-19 it means you have no detectable virus at the time your sample was collected. It does not mean that you are not infected. You can still carry the virus even with a negative test.
- You can still get sick, so you must self-monitor and if you get any symptoms you should urgently get assessed.
- If you test negative, and if:
 - you have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19,
 - you have travelled in the past 14 days from a high-risk area,
 - if you have cough, fever, or trouble breathing
 - you still **MUST** self-isolate for 14-days.
- If you test negative, and if:
 - you have no symptoms
 - your contact with someone with COVID-19 was **NOT** close
 - you should self-monitor for 14 days and get assessed if you develop symptoms

CAN THE TEST TELL ME IF I HAD COVID-19 IN THE PAST BUT NOT NOW?

- No. This swab test only finds out if you have COVID-19 at the time the test is collected.
- An antibody/serology test is needed to find out if you have ever had a previous infection.



Please see SLFNHA's testing strategy for more information
