

## Information for people who are being tested for COVID-19 because they have symptoms

You are being tested because you are **unwell with symptoms** that could be COVID-19. The symptoms you have can also be caused by many other viruses, like influenza. However, you have been assessed as needing a test for COVID-19 because your circumstances put you at higher risk than most other people in New Zealand for getting COVID-19; i.e. one of the following applies to you in the 14 days before your symptoms started:

- recent contact with a confirmed or probable case,
- recent overseas travel,
- direct contact with overseas travellers (e.g. staff working at the borders and in managed isolation facilities),
- worked on an aircraft or vessel on international routes, or
- cleaned at an international airport or port in areas visited by people arriving from abroad.

We are only testing you today for COVID-19.

### What happens next?

- You will have a swab taken from the back of your nose or throat.
- The **results are usually back within 1-3 days.**
- You **must stay at home in self-isolation** until you receive your results.
- If you have not received notification of your result after 5 days, please follow up with the place your test was done or contact your General Practitioner to seek advice.

### While you are waiting for your test results you should isolate yourself from others as much as possible:

- **Stay at home.** You need to stay in your home, or the place you are currently staying, **except** for getting medical care. Do not go out in the community.
- **Separate yourself from other people in your home as much as you can.** If you can, you should stay in a specific room, away from others in your home. Limit the number of contacts within your bubble, ideally to one person who is in good health.
- **Avoid sharing household items.** Avoid sharing dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with other people in your home when you have used them. After using these items, wash them thoroughly. Use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- **Do not have visitors in your home.** People who drop things off to you should leave them on the doorstep. If it is urgent to speak to someone who you don't live with, do this by phone.

### What do I do if I start to feel worse?

If you feel worse, you should phone your GP or ring Healthline on 0800 358 5453. Healthline operates 24/7 and interpreters are available. You need to **let them know you have been tested for COVID-19 already. If you have difficulty breathing, are severely unwell or it is an emergency, call for an ambulance on 111. Tell them that you are awaiting a COVID-19 swab result.**

### **What happens next if my result is negative?**

If your test result is **negative** you will be notified about it via **text message** or a phone call. The message will direct you to Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) (<https://bit.ly/ARPHSNegRes>) for further instructions. **You need to stay in self-isolation until you are better** so you don't pass on the illness you have to others. Talk with your General Practitioner or primary care provider about when you are able to return to work. There are some situations where **people may need to stay in self-isolation for longer, even though they have had a negative result**. ARPHS' website explains when this is the case. If in doubt, phone your GP or ring Healthline on 0800 358 5453.

**Having a negative test now does not mean you can't get COVID-19 in the future. If you become unwell again with symptoms that could be COVID-19 you should be tested again.**

### **What happens next if my result is positive?**

- If you have a confirmed **positive** result someone from Auckland Regional Public Health Service will call you to tell you.
- The Public Health Service will talk with you more about what this means for you, including **how long you need to stay in isolation for**. You will be supported to access any extra help you need.
- The Public Health Service will ask you about all the people you have had contact with recently and some of those people will be asked to stay at home (in quarantine) in case they become unwell too.

### **What happens to the information collected about me?**

Your information will be shared with those who are monitoring and managing COVID-19 in our community. We will only use and disclose your personal information if that is permitted by law. Within the national response to COVID-19 disclosure may occur to your GP, healthcare organisations such as Public Health, and the Ministry of Health, your employer, and your whānau, for example so that contact tracing can be done. You have a right to access and correct information held about you.

### **How can I protect myself and others from COVID-19?**

- Thoroughly wash and dry your hands often through the day. Use soap and water.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with disposable tissues, or cough or sneeze into your bent elbow. Place used tissues in the rubbish bin, wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water, then dry them well.
- Clean surfaces regularly, especially before others use them.
- Maintain your distance from others whenever possible.

### **Where can I go for more advice?**

For medical advice call Healthline on 0800 358 5453. Healthline operates 24/7 and interpreters are available. Note, Healthline will NOT be able to access your results.

You can get more information from [Auckland Regional Public Health Service: www.arphs.health.nz](http://www.arphs.health.nz). For general help and advice about the COVID-19 situation in New Zealand you can visit [www.covid19.govt.nz](http://www.covid19.govt.nz) or call the free government helpline on 0800 779 997 (8am to 10pm, seven days a week).