Testing Yourself for COVID-19

Using a self-test kit is a fast and easy way to find out if you have COVID-19. Testing yourself may not be as accurate as a test by a trained professional. But using a self-test is an option if you cannot get to a testing site. Be sure to follow the test kit directions exactly.

**When to use your COVID-19 self-test**

- **Test yourself before gathering indoors with others**, especially with anyone who is unvaccinated, immunocompromised, or at risk of severe illness.
- **Test yourself if you have symptoms of COVID-19 and can’t get to a testing site.** Stay home and away from others if you’re sick.

**What to do after testing yourself for COVID-19**

To submit your self-test result to the Rhode Island Department of Health, visit portal.ri.gov/s/selftest.

**If your self-test result is positive**, it means that the test detected the virus, and it is very likely that you have COVID-19. Stay home (isolate) for at least 5 days. Someone with COVID-19 needs to isolate even if they don’t have symptoms. For more information about isolation, visit covid.ri.gov/whattodo.

There are effective treatments for COVID-19 infection. A healthcare provider can treat you for COVID-19 based on a self-test result. They may want to test you again to make sure your self-test result is accurate. For more information about treatment, visit covid.ri.gov/treatment.

Call 911 or get yourself to the nearest hospital if you think you are having a medical emergency. This can include trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, the inability to wake or stay awake, or bluish lips or face.

**If your self-test result is negative**, it means that the test did not detect the virus.

- If you took the test while you had symptoms and followed all instructions carefully, a negative result means your current illness is probably not COVID-19.

- It is possible for someone who has COVID-19 to get a negative result on a self-test. This is called a false negative. You may also test negative if the specimen was collected too early in your infection period.

**If you think your self-test result may be incorrect**, you should test yourself again within a few days, with at least 24 hours between tests. You can also get another test at a local pharmacy, respiratory clinic, or by a healthcare provider.

For more information about how to get tested for COVID-19, visit covid.ri.gov/testing.