



## COVID-19 home testing

At-home and over-the-counter (OTC) COVID-19 testing kits are test kits you can buy without a prescription. You can buy them at a pharmacy, retail store, or online, though they may be in short supply.

### When to use a home test

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends diagnostic testing for people who have [symptoms of COVID-19](#), or have had close contact with someone with COVID-19, regardless of vaccination status.

- The best testing window after potential exposure to COVID-19 is 5 – 7 days after close contact with an infected person.
- Any person who experiences [symptoms consistent with COVID-19](#) should seek a COVID-19 test regardless of vaccination status.

### How to use a home test

Follow the test instructions exactly and perform the steps in the order that they are listed. The test kit may also provide other resources, such as quick reference guides or instructional videos, to help you perform the test correctly.

### Are certain types of at-home/OTC tests better than others?

If used correctly, all COVID-19 diagnostic at-home/OTC tests currently authorized by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are about the same.

### Does health insurance cover home tests?

The Oregon Health Authority and Oregon's coordinated care organizations cover at-home/OTC products (up to four tests per month) without a prescription or prior authorization for Oregon Health Plan and CWM members.

Medicare and other health insurance plans may not cover at-home/OTC products, but should cover COVID-19 tests ordered by a health care provider.

If you have a [flexible spending account](#) for health care expenses, you may be able to use that account to pay for COVID-19 at-home/OTC products.

## What to do if you test positive with a home test

Contact your health care provider about your positive test result, and stay in contact with them during your illness. If your illness becomes severe, seek medical attention.

[Self-isolate](#) for at least 5 days after testing positive or from the time symptoms began.

Stay isolated until:

- You have been fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medicine AND
- Other symptoms have improved.

After the 5 days of isolation, you should wear a mask for an additional 5 days when you are around others.

False positive results are rare. You do not need confirmatory testing following a positive home test.

If you test negative but experience COVID-like symptoms, contact your health care provider as negative results do not rule out a COVID-19 infection. False negative results are common.

## Learn more about COVID-19 home testing

[Visit the CDC website](#) for more information and find videos about how to correctly perform a home test.

Visit the FDA website to find currently authorized at-home/OTC [antigen](#) and [molecular](#) home test and collection kits. You can also find authorized home test and collection kits available by prescription.

### Sources

<https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/coronavirus-covid-19-update-fda-authorizes-additional-otc-home-test-increase-access-rapid-testing>

<https://www.fda.gov/consumers/consumer-updates/coronavirus-disease-2019-testing-basics>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/self-testing.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated-guidance.html>

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/testing-international-air-travelers.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/07/well/live/covid-rapid-at-home-test.html?referringSource=articleShare>

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