

COVID-19 Public Testing Guidance

As with many other common viral infections (e.g. the flu), COVID-19 testing is only recommended when the result of a test will inform decisions about treatment or care. If you are generally in good health, and are experiencing mild symptoms of COVID, you probably do not need clinical testing. However, you should get tested at the local health centre or testing centre if you have symptoms of COVID-19 **and**:

- Are currently being treated for cancer.
- Have had a solid organ transplant.
- Are moderately or severely immunocompromised.
- Live in a congregate living facility.
- Are unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, or haven't received a booster.
- Are pregnant.
- Are under 5 or over 60 years of age.
- Have a BMI over 40.
- Have kidney disease, diabetes, or serious liver disease.
- Have high blood pressure.
- Have COPD or other severe chronic lung disease.
- Have cardiac disease.
- If you have severe symptoms that cannot be managed at home.
- If you tested positive for COVID more than 90 days ago.
- Work in Healthcare, Law Enforcement, Fire Fighting, Corrections, A Group Home or Shelter, or are Med-Evac Flight Crew.

If you have mild symptoms of COVID-19 and do not meet any of the above criteria, you do not need testing. Stay home and away from others until your symptoms have improved and you have not had a fever for 24 hours. If you want to test at home: kits are available for free at any Northern Store, or the Fieldhouse & City Hall in Yellowknife.

If you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19, you do not need a test.

As was the case during the public health emergency, NWT healthcare professionals do not conduct employer mandated COVID testing, pre-travel testing, or provide sick notes or test results for work or school absences.

If you test positive at home and are under age 5 or over 60, have serious medical conditions, or are not immunized, please speak to a healthcare provider.

IF YOU TAKE A TEST AND THE RESULT IS POSITIVE

If you test positive on any test, the Chief Public Health Officer (CPHO) recommends that you stay home and limit your contact with others. Consider for the next 10 days: wearing a mask while indoors, reducing your contacts (especially to vulnerable persons), physically distancing from others, avoiding high risk-activities and try to work alone if possible.

- If you test positive on an at-home test, you do not require an in-person test unless you are under-immunized or have a chronic health condition (refer to page 1 for circumstances where in-person testing is recommended).
- If you need repeat lab testing or assessment, make an appointment with your health centre, or in Yellowknife book online.

HOUSEHOLD CONTACTS OF POSITIVE CASES

If someone in your household tests positive, the CPHO recommends that you limit your contacts for 10 days. Self-monitor for symptoms, consider for the next 10 days: wearing a mask while indoors, reducing your contacts (especially to vulnerable persons), physically distance from others, avoiding high risk activities and try to work alone in possible.

- Testing is not necessary if you have no symptoms, but you can take an at-home test if you wish (refer to page 1 for where to access free Rapid Antigen Test kits).
- **If you develop symptoms:** stay home, follow the instructions above for individuals who have tested positive, and follow instructions below for when you can end limiting contact with others. At-home testing is optional but book an in-person test if you're at greater risk of serious outcomes from COVID (see first page).

ENDING RECOMMENDED LIMITED CONTACT

You should only stop limiting contact with others once all of the following is true:

1. It has been at least 10 days since your positive test or symptoms started **and**
2. Your symptoms are improving, and you have had no fever for at least 24 hours.

Other members of your household who chose to limit contact with others while you were sick can stop limiting contact at the same time as you provided they have not developed symptoms or tested positive.

IF YOUR SYMPTOMS GET WORSE

If you develop symptoms and they do not improve after 5 days, or worsen, or if you are concerned, book an appointment at a clinic or health centre, and continue limiting contact with others until assessed by a healthcare provider.

If you have difficulty breathing or any serious symptoms call 911.