

At Home COVID-19 Testing in California – What You Need to Know



Test at home and keep your friends, family & community safe.

When should I test for COVID-19?

1. **If you have any symptoms** – test immediately, even if you are vaccinated. If your test is negative but you continue to have symptoms, test again 24-48 hours later. Low amounts of virus early in infection can sometimes be missed by a test, and the test can be positive a few days later.
2. **If you have had close contact to someone with COVID-19**, please follow current [guidance on isolation and quarantine](#).
 - Test immediately if you have symptoms of COVID-19 at any time.
 - Test within 3-5 days after exposure if you have no symptoms*

**If you recovered from COVID-19 in the last 90 days and do not have new symptoms after a close contact, you do not need to test.*

3. **Consider testing before AND 3-5 days after a gathering, a large event or travel**, especially if around [people who are higher risk](#) (older adults, immunocompromised, unvaccinated people). If traveling, read our [travel fact sheet](#).

Where can I get an at-home test?

- Order free at-home tests for your household at [COVIDtests.gov](#). Tests will be mailed to your home in 7-12 days by USPS.
- Get free tests with insurance at your local drugstore (in-store or online):
 - For MediCal or Medicare – bring your card to a pharmacy window
 - For private insurance - contact your insurance company for reimbursement
- Purchase from your local drugstore (in-store or online). Tests are usually about \$10 each.

What if my test is positive?

If you test positive, you have COVID-19. Follow [recommendations to prevent spreading the disease to others](#). Reach out to a health care provider and learn about [COVID-19 treatments](#). If you have severe symptoms call 911 or go to the nearest hospital. Report your positive test on [canotify.ca.gov](#).

What if I cannot work because of COVID-19?

If you can't work because you have COVID-19 or were exposed, you can [file a Disability Insurance \(DI\) claim](#). If you can't work because you are caring for a family member who was exposed or has COVID-19, you can [file a Paid Family Leave \(PFL\) claim](#). Both claims must have a note from a healthcare provider.

COVID-19 can feel like a cold, allergies, or the flu and include the following symptoms:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste
- New loss of smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion
- Runny nose
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea



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