



Testing for Covid-19 – What you need to know

22nd September 2020



Healthwatch East Sussex knows that the demand for Covid-19 tests has increased and that you might find it difficult to get one.

We have put together the latest information for you about who can get a test and how to apply.

Have you applied for, or already had one or more tests since the start of September? If so, please tell us how it was for you.

Your feedback, good or bad, can help test providers and service planners understand where things are working well and what needs to change.

Share your feedback on your experience of Covid-19 testing

Who should have a Covid-19 test?

The Government is currently providing 'free' Covid-19 swab tests to people of all ages (including children) who exhibit the following symptoms of coronavirus:

- a high temperature
- a new, continuous cough
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste

If you do not have symptoms, please do not apply for a Covid-19 test.

You can also get a test if:

- you live in England and have been told to have a test before you go into hospital, for example, for surgery
 - your local council asks you to get a test
 - you're taking part in a government pilot project
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When should I get a test?

If you have coronavirus symptoms, you need to get a test done as soon as possible.

- You need to get the test done in the first 5 days of having symptoms. Home testing kits will need to be ordered no later than the fourth day of symptoms.

- If you have symptoms you should immediately isolate for ten days or until a negative test result is received, only leaving home to get tested. Anyone in your household who does not have symptoms should isolate for 14 days. This means not going out at all, even for shopping.

If isolating at home means that you need help or support in accessing food, medicines or other essentials then please contact your nearest [Community Hub](#) for assistance.

When shouldn't I get a test?

If you have been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus you should **not get tested** unless you have coronavirus symptoms. *A negative test result does not change the period of time that you will be required to self-isolate.*

If you have been abroad and are quarantining, you should **not get tested** unless you have coronavirus symptoms. *A negative test result does not change the period of time that you will be required to quarantine.*

How to apply for a test

If you have symptoms and need to book a test, you can do this [online](#) or by ringing 119.

You can choose to take the test via:

- A test site near you
- A home test kit (these need to be ordered within the first 4 days of symptoms)

If no tests are available online, please **do not** call helplines such as NHS111 to get a test.

No extra tests are available through the helplines.

Further information

For more detailed information on the eligibility criteria for Covid-19 tests and guidance on how to apply for one, please refer to the Government guidance: <https://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test>.

Tell us your experience

We would be extremely interested to hear about your experiences of Covid-19 testing:

- How easy was it to apply?
- How quickly did you get a test?
- How was the testing process for you?
- How quickly did you receive the results?

Please [leave your feedback](#) or send us a message through our social media channels and tell us how this process has been for you.

We anonymise all of our data, so your responses will be confidential unless you post your comments publicly on social media.

For more information:

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