

Why am I not being tested for COVID-19?

As cases of COVID-19 increase in the community, we understand that you may want to be tested when you are feeling unwell or nervous. However, during a pandemic situation, we must carefully consider who to test in order to ensure demand for supplies are not overwhelmed.

Because there is no treatment a hospital can provide for someone with mild illness, staying at home until you feel well is still the best course of action anyone can take to avoid spreading COVID-19.

You will **not** be tested if:

- You do not have any symptoms
- You do not work or reside in a high risk setting (e.g., healthcare institution, homeless shelter, prison or other setting with vulnerable populations)
- You do not have a fever over 38°C and symptoms
- You do not have signs of a severe medical illness
- You do not require admission to a healthcare institution

If I'm not tested, does that mean I don't have COVID-19?

No. Given the nature of the virus and the broad spread, you may still have COVID-19. However, since the illness is relatively mild in most people, advice for what to do remains the same with or without a test:

- Stay home and avoid contact with others for at least 7 days
- Before you end self-isolation, make sure you have not had any infectious symptoms for more than 48 hours
- If you must leave your home, do not take public transit, and wear a mask if available

Who is being tested?

People who will need admission to hospital, people with severe symptoms, and people who work in a high risk setting will be tested for COVID-19. People who work in high risk setting risk spreading the disease to other vulnerable people. High risk settings include healthcare institutions, homeless shelters, prisons or other settings with vulnerable populations.

Why can't everyone be tested? Isn't that safer?

While testing everyone to trace the spread of COVID-19 would be ideal, the demand for tests far outweighs our ability to test. In order to keep healthcare environments and the public as safe as possible, only those at risk of severe illness or high risk of spreading the virus can be tested at this time.

We understand that many people are currently experiencing workplace pressures to have tests or have worries about affecting vulnerable family members. The testing guidelines we have established allow for use of resources at a pace that will help us keep the highest number of people safe and allow us to test when we need it most.

We appreciate that you have taken responsibility in coming to be tested to keep yourself and others safe. If you experience persistent fever, new shortness of breath or chest pain, please return for emergency care. Otherwise, we ask that you continue to act responsibly and stay in home isolation until symptoms have resolved.