

## Updated COVID-19 Testing Guidance

On March 18, 2020, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Health Director Amy Acton, M.D., MPH, updated guidance on COVID-19 testing. “Our testing is limited,” Governor DeWine said. “If you’re worried about a family member, I understand that concern, but don’t fixate on testing. The vast majority of Ohioans who have symptoms do not need to be tested.”

Testing must be limited to Ohioans who are the sickest or the most at risk and those professionals who provide for their care and service.

Other details:

- Due to a shortage of testing materials, it has become necessary to tighten testing criteria for individuals who may have COVID-19.
- Although the number of test kits is increasing, the materials needed for specimen collection are critically short nationwide.
- At this point, we need to restrict testing to those who are most severely ill, are moderately ill with a high risk of complications -- such as those who are elderly or have serious medical issues -- and professionals who are critical to providing care and service to those who are ill.
- In these circumstances, prompt laboratory results are required. Specimens should be processed in hospitals with a testing capacity that can promptly provide results, at a facility that has acceptable turn-around time, or through the Ohio Department of Health Public Health Laboratory. If specimens are being sent to the ODH lab, the person requesting the test should contact the local health department. The local health department then coordinates with the ODH Bureau of Infectious Diseases to prioritize these tests.
- For those who are concerned about not being able to access a test, please know:
  - Testing does not change treatment. The treatment for COVID-19 is supportive. There is no medication that treats COVID-19.
  - A negative test does not mean that you will never get COVID-19. If you are exposed after testing, or if you were in the incubation period when tested, you could become ill with COVID-19 later.

- If you have been exposed to COVID-19 and are under quarantine, a negative test will not release you from quarantine. The incubation period is two to 14 days, and even if you test negative early in the quarantine period, you could become ill later during that period.
- If you feel ill, act as if you have COVID-19. Stay home and take care of yourself. Isolate yourself from others in the home, rest, drink plenty of fluids, and take medication to relieve symptoms.
- If you have more serious symptoms, such as shortness of breath, call your healthcare provider for direction. Go to the emergency department only in an emergency and be sure that you or your healthcare provider call ahead, so the hospital will be ready for you.

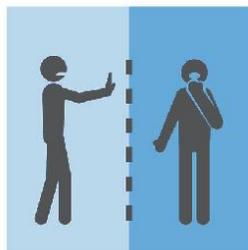
For additional information, visit [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov).

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

*If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available. Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990 (1-800-846-8517 TTY), connect with a trained counselor through the Ohio Crisis Text Line – text the keyword “4HOPE” to 741 741, or call the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services help line at 1-877-275-6364 to find resources in your community.*



STAY HOME  
WHEN YOU ARE  
SICK



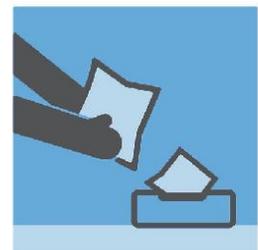
AVOID CONTACT  
WITH PEOPLE  
WHO ARE SICK



GET ADEQUATE SLEEP  
AND EAT WELL-  
BALANCED  
MEALS



WASH HANDS OFTEN  
WITH WATER AND SOAP  
(20 SECONDS  
OR LONGER)



DRY HANDS WITH  
A CLEAN TOWEL  
OR AIR DRY  
YOUR HANDS



COVER YOUR MOUTH  
WITH A TISSUE OR  
SLEEVE WHEN  
COUGHING OR SNEEZING



AVOID TOUCHING  
YOUR EYES, NOSE,  
OR MOUTH WITH  
UNWASHED HANDS  
OR AFTER  
TOUCHING SURFACES



CLEAN AND DISINFECT  
“HIGH-TOUCH”  
SURFACES OFTEN



CALL BEFORE VISITING  
YOUR DOCTOR



PRACTICE GOOD  
HYGIENE HABITS

For more information, visit: [coronavirus.ohio.gov](https://coronavirus.ohio.gov)