

# Guidance on whether to get a Covid test

None of these are valid reasons to get a test –

**If you have returned from abroad or are about to travel, you are returning to the workplace, you have been in contact with a confirmed case or if another member of your household has symptoms. You may be advised to isolate if you have been in contact with a confirmed but you should only get a test if you have symptoms.**

By following these simple rules, we can ensure people who need a test can get one.

## When to get a test or not:

- Only get a test if you have coronavirus symptoms or have been asked to get tested a doctor or a public health professional or by your local council. The main symptoms of coronavirus are **a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste**. Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.
- Individuals should isolate until they receive a test result or until 10 days after the onset of symptoms.
- Do not use this service to get a test in order to travel to another country. We do not provide certificates for travel purposes. You can pay for a private test.
- If your employer, school, or travel company has asked for evidence of a negative coronavirus test result, we are unable to provide this service. You should only get tested if you have symptoms.
- If someone in your household starts to have symptoms, then they must get tested and the rest of your household should self-isolate with them whilst they wait for the results. If you or other members of the household don't have symptoms, then you should not get a test – only people with symptoms should get tested. Most people who are tested in person get their results the next day. [Full guidance on self-isolation is available on gov.uk](#).
- 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.
- Do not stockpile tests. If you develop symptoms in future you will be able to book a test. There is no need to order a test in case of future use.
- If you have symptoms and need to book a test, you can do this online or by ringing 119. Do not call 111 which is an urgent care service and cannot help with tests.

## For organisations and employers:

- **Schools:** please follow the official [guidance on testing](#). It is very important that this guidance is followed. Schools should not advise pupils or teachers to take a test unless they exhibit one or more of the listed symptoms. If there is a confirmed case then schools should not advise entire classes or year groups to get tested. Only those with symptoms or those advised by their clinician or Local Authority should get a test. Schools must not require students without symptoms to provide evidence of a negative test before letting them back to school.
- **Employers:** you should not be asking members of staff to get tested before they come into the workplace. You can also help by communicating the guidance around testing to your staff.
- **Travel companies:** you should not be directing clients to NHS Test and Trace to get a test for anything related to overseas travel.

Date: 21 Sept 2020