



Home Collection Test Kits for SARS-CoV-2 Infection Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What are home collection test kits?

Home collection test kits allow you to collect a sample at home, either from your nose or from saliva, to be tested for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. These are NOT home-based tests; the sample you collect must be sent to a lab for testing. The testing company will let you know if your test was positive or negative for SARS-CoV-2.

How do I order one?

There are many companies that manufacture home collection kits. You can ask your health care provider to recommend one or click on [In Vitro Diagnostics EUAs](#), then scroll down to the section labeled “Individual EUAs for Molecular Diagnostic Tests for SARS-CoV-2” and type “home collection” into the search box. Only collection kits that have been authorized by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are on this list. If you use a kit that is not on this list, your results may not be accurate.

Once you go to the website for your preferred testing company, you will be asked a list of screening questions. Depending on how you answer them, you may be allowed to purchase a test kit. In some instances, such as if your symptoms are considered severe, you will be directed to contact your doctor instead. Depending on the company, you may need to wait for a physician to review your answers to the screening questions before you can purchase a kit. Some kits allow you to answer screening questions on behalf of your child. Once you pay for the kit online, it will be shipped to you. Different testing companies have different shipping times.

How do I collect the sample?

Different tests require different collection methods, and each test comes with instructions for collecting your sample. For some, you will collect a sample from the lower part of your nose (“anterior nares”) and others from your saliva. The CDC has guidance on collecting samples from the [anterior nares](#). Some of these kits include web-based instructional videos for you to watch, and some require that a healthcare provider observe you collect the sample via video chat.

How do I ship my sample to the lab?

Each kit comes with instructions about how to ship the sample back using a pre-paid shipping label and provided packaging. Typically, you must ship the sample back on the same day you collect it, and some labs don’t receive deliveries on weekends. Once you prepare your sample to be shipped to the lab, you’ll need to take it to the drop-off location given in the instructions, such as a FedEx drop box.

How will I get my result?

The testing company will tell you how long it will take to get your result. You may have the opportunity to speak to someone on the phone or by video chat about your result. If your test is positive for SARS-CoV-2, someone at the testing company will tell you what to do next. By law, your result will be reported to your local health department, who will attempt to contact you if your test result is positive.

What should I do if my test result is positive?

- Contact your healthcare provider.
- Stay home until you meet **all three** conditions below (or see [instructions for isolation](#)):
 - 1) At least 10 days have passed since your symptoms began or, if you never had symptoms, 10 days have passed since you collected the sample that tested positive
 - 2) At least 24 hours have passed since you stopped having a fever without using fever-reducing medications
 - 3) Other symptoms have improved
- Share these [quarantine instructions](#) with any [close contacts](#).