Getting tested for COVID-19

There are different tests you can get to check if you have coronavirus (COVID-19).

Rapid antigen tests

A rapid antigen test is a quick way to detect COVID-19.

PCR tests

This is a nose and throat swab that is taken at a testing clinic and sent to a lab to be tested.

Most people can now use a rapid antigen test result to confirm they are positive for COVID-19.

Who should do a rapid antigen test

- People with symptoms
- Household, social, workplace or education contact of a positive case
- Pre-event testing, before visiting vulnerable family members
- A worker, resident, patient, or client in a high-risk setting where there is a current confirmed outbreak
- Before going into hospital for a procedure if this is requested by the hospital.
- International arrivals (passengers and flight crew entering NSW from overseas)

What happens if I get a positive rapid antigen test result?

If you test positive on a rapid antigen test you may be a confirmed case if:

Test result	Symptoms	Exposure risk	Next step
✔	✔	Known or unknown contact	You are a confirmed case, follow the advice for people testing positive for COVID-19
✔	✔ or ✘	Known high risk or household contact	You are a confirmed case, follow the advice for people testing positive for COVID-19
✔	✘	No known contact	You may be a case, take another rapid antigen test in 24 hours or have a PCR test

You do not need to have your rapid antigen test confirmed with a PCR test unless you are:

- pregnant (>20 weeks gestation)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- unvaccinated (16 years and over)
- immunosuppressed
- a worker, resident, patient, or client in a high-risk setting where there is not a current confirmed outbreak. High risk settings include: healthcare, aged care, disability care, and correctional facilities

- asked to by a registered medical practitioner

If you are have difficulty or delays in accessing a PCR test, you should call the NSW Health COVID-19 Care at Home Support Line on 1800 960 933.

What happens if I get a negative rapid antigen test result?

If you are a household contact or classified as a high risk exposure you need to continue to isolate for 7 days. You must follow the advice for people exposed to COVID-19 to determine your risk. To determine if you are a high risk exposure use the Information for people exposed to COVID-19 and follow the relevant isolation advice.

If you have symptoms please take another rapid antigen test in 24 hours or have a PCR test. If your second test is positive you are considered a confirmed case. If the second test is negative, you should isolate until your symptoms have gone.

If I am a confirmed case what do I do?

You should follow the advice for people testing positive for COVID-19 and self-isolate for 7 days since date of the positive rapid antigen test.

You should register your positive test result as soon as possible by visiting the Service NSW app or website (coming soon). Providing NSW Health with your test result will enable us to connect you to the best care and recovery plan appropriate to you.