

COVID-19 Public Testing and Isolation Guidance

The following applies regardless of vaccination status

As with many other common viral infections (e.g. the flu), COVID-19 testing is only recommended when the result of a test will inform decisions about treatment or care. In other words, if you are generally in good health, and are experiencing mild symptoms of COVID, you probably do not need to be tested. However, you should get tested at the local health centre or testing centre if you have symptoms of COVID-19 **and**:

- Are currently being treated for cancer.
- Have had a solid organ transplant.
- Are moderately or severely immunocompromised.
- Live in a congregate living facility.
- Work in healthcare or any vulnerable sector.
- Live in the same home as a healthcare or vulnerable sector worker.
- Are unvaccinated, partially vaccinated, or haven't received a booster.
- Are pregnant.
- Are under 5 or over 60 years of age.
- Have a BMI over 40.
- Have kidney disease or diabetes.
- Have serious liver disease.
- Have high blood pressure.
- Have COPD or other severe chronic lung disease.
- Have cardiac disease.
- If you have severe symptoms that cannot be managed at home.

If you have mild symptoms of COVID-19, you do not need a test. Stay home and away from others until your symptoms have improved and you have not had a fever for 24 hours. If you want to test at home and do not fall into one of the categories listed above, you can pick up a test kit free of charge at any Northern Store, or at the Fieldhouse or City Hall in Yellowknife.

If you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19, you do not need a test.

As was the case during the pandemic, healthcare professionals in the NWT do not conduct employer mandated COVID testing, pre-travel testing, or provide sick notes or COVID test results for work or school absences.

IF YOU TAKE A TEST AND THE RESULT IS POSITIVE

If you test positive on any test we continue to recommend that you isolate.

- If you test positive on an at-home test, you do not require an in-person test unless you are under-immunized or have a chronic health condition (refer to page 1 for conditions and circumstances where in-person testing is recommended).
- If you need repeat lab testing or assessment, make an appointment with your health centre, or in Yellowknife book online.

HOUSEHOLD CONTACTS OF POSITIVE CASES

If someone in your household tests positive, we recommend that you isolate as well. Self-monitor for symptoms, avoid going to work or out in public. If you must leave your home, please wear a mask and socially distance from others.

- Testing is not necessary if you have no symptoms, but you can take an at-home Rapid Antigen Test if you wish (tests available for free at Northern stores, and the Fieldhouse and City Hall in Yellowknife).
- **If you develop symptoms:** stay home, follow the instructions above for individuals who have tested positive, and follow the instructions below for ending isolation. At-home testing is optional but book an in-person test if you're at greater risk of serious outcomes from COVID (see first page).

ENDING RECOMMENDED ISOLATION

You should only end isolation with all of the following:

1. It has been at least 5 days since your positive test or symptoms started **and**
2. Your symptoms are improving, and you have had no fever for at least 24 hours.

If other members of your household chose to isolate while you were sick, they can also end isolation with you as long as they have not developed symptoms or tested positive.

IF YOUR SYMPTOMS GET WORSE

If you develop symptoms and they do not improve after 5 days, or worsen, or if you are concerned, book an appointment at a clinic or health centre and remain in isolation until assessed by a healthcare provider.

If you have difficulty breathing or any serious symptoms call 911.

If you test positive at home and are under age 5 or over 60, have serious medical conditions, or are not immunized, please speak to a healthcare provider or call 811 for more information