



Building a Healthy Boston
Mayor Michelle Wu

Boston Public Health Commission

At-Home COVID-19 Test Kit Fact Sheet

As we continue to face the COVID-19 pandemic, at-home rapid tests are an important strategy to help detect and prevent the spread of COVID in the community. The Boston Public Health Commission is pleased to offer rapid tests to Boston residents while supplies last for your use in the comfort of your own home.

If you have symptoms (fever, cough, headache or other symptoms) regardless of whether you have been fully vaccinated, partially vaccinated, boosted or unvaccinated, you should test for COVID-19. If you are unvaccinated and have been exposed to someone who tested positive for COVID-19, you should also be tested.

Please follow these steps to make sure your testing experience is as accurate and safe as possible:

- Store test and all components in original package until ready to use
- Keep test and all components at room temperature, out of direct sunlight, and away from children and pets
- Check the expiration date on the test box. Do not use if the test has expired
- Carefully read and follow all manufacturer's instructions
 - It is recommended that you wear gloves when performing the test
 - If performing the test on another person, please wear a mask
- Clean the surface where you will be conducting the test (e.g., table, countertop, etc...)
- Wash your hands thoroughly with warm water and soap before testing
- Once finished, clean the surface again, wash your hands with warm water and soap, and throw away all testing components. Never save or re-use any testing equipment.

If you test positive:

- Inform your healthcare provider immediately and keep them informed of your symptoms
- Please isolate following Massachusetts guidelines for self-isolation found at www.mass.gov/quarantine

- Stay away from others, including pets, as much as possible, even staying in one room and using a separate bathroom if possible
- Wear a mask if you must be around household individuals
- Don't share household items (plates, sink, etc.) and clean every surface you touch and wash your hands with soap and warm water throughout the day
- If symptoms never develop, day one of your isolation period will be the day of the positive test and last for ten days. If symptoms develop at any time after the date of the test, the required ten days isolation starts over from the day symptoms present
- Tell your close contacts (anyone you have spent more than 15 minutes with) that they have been exposed immediately, and encourage them to get tested
- In very rare cases a test may provide a false positive. If you think this is the case, re-test, follow all instructions again for confirmation or speak to your healthcare provider for different options

If Negative:

- If you have symptoms, you may have another illness or the test may be a “false negative.” Repeat the test within 24-48 hours using the other test kit in the package. You should also tell your healthcare provider to repeat testing for COVID and other illnesses.
 - If you know you have been exposed and have symptoms, it's possible that the test was conducted too early for the virus to be found. Repeat the test within 24-48 hours using the other test kit in the package. If the 1st and 2nd test were negative, AND all instructions were followed properly, you likely do not have COVID-19.

If results say “Invalid” or “Error”:

- Very rarely a test will not show a result. This may be because the sample wasn't conducted properly. Review manufacturer's instructions and follow up with them for help. If you have questions about any results, please contact your healthcare provider.

**If you have any questions, please contact the Mayor's Health Line at
617-534-5050**