

Te whakamātautau mō te KOWHEORI-19 me te pūrongo hua COVID-19 testing

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It is recommended that you take a rapid antigen test (RAT) if you have cold, flu or any other COVID-19 symptoms. If your test is positive, it is recommended you isolate for 5 days, even if you only have mild symptoms. You should report your result in My Health Record so you can be connected with help and support if needed.

Free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests

Free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests (RATs) will remain available to collect from participating pharmacies and RAT collection sites until 30 September 2024.

[Find locations offering free RATs – Healthpoint
\(https://healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19/\)](https://healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19/)

Types of COVID-19 tests

Two types of COVID-19 tests are available to the general public in Aotearoa New Zealand.

COVID-19 rapid antigen tests (RATs)

RATs are the main testing method for people with COVID-19 symptoms, or who are household contacts.

Results take up to 20 minutes.

Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests

PCRs are used in some situations by health professionals who can advise you on the right test to take in your situation. They are only available with clinical referral. Results take 2 to 5 days.

Where to get COVID-19 tests

You can leave your home to get a COVID-19 test while you are completing your recommended 5 day isolation. If you need to leave home to get a test, it is recommended that you wear a face mask.

It is recommended that you keep some RATs at home for testing if you or anyone in your household develop symptoms.

Access free COVID-19 RAT home testing kits

P RATs will remain free until 30 September 2024. You can continue to pick up free RATs for you and your household members from participating pharmacies and RAT collection sites.

[Find a collection site near you – Healthpoint \(https://healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19/\)](https://healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19/)

Get a test from your healthcare provider

Your healthcare provider may offer COVID-19 tests. Call them to find out and follow their advice. There may be a charge for some people.

If you need help to get RATs

You may be able to get RATs delivered if you:

- live rurally
- are disabled

- are immunocompromised
- experience some other difficulty getting tests.

To find out if you can get RATs delivered call [0800 222 478 \(tel:0800222478\)](tel:0800222478)

How to use a COVID-19 rapid antigen test

RAT kits include instructions in each box. They guide you through:

- swabbing your nose
- mixing the swab in the liquid
- placing the drops on the test cassette
- understanding the results.

There are different brands of RATs. While the instructions are similar for each, make sure to check the instructions specific to your kit.

If you test positive for COVID-19

If you test positive for COVID-19, it is recommended that you isolate for at least 5 days, even if you only have mild symptoms, starting at Day 0. This includes if you have had COVID-19 before. Day 0 is the day your symptoms started, or when you tested positive, whichever came first.

Some people can still be infectious after 5 days. If you are still unwell after you have completed 5 days of isolation, it is recommended that you continue to stay home until you are recovered.

Follow the advice for people who have COVID-19.

[If you have COVID-19 \(/conditions-treatments/infectious-diseases/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19/\)](#)

By reporting your positive test result in My Health Record, you can be connected with any help and support you might need.

[My Health Record \(https://my.health.nz\)](https://my.health.nz)

()What your household contacts should do

You are considered a household contact if you live with someone who has COVID-19, or you have spent at least 8 hours with them in the same home

while the person was infectious.

If you are a household contact and you develop one or more COVID-19 symptoms, you are recommended to stay at home and test with a RAT.

If you test negative but your symptoms persist, continue to stay at home and repeat the test with a RAT in 24 and 48 hours.

If at any point you test positive for COVID-19, it is recommended that you isolate for at least 5 days and follow relevant guidance.

[If you have COVID-19 \(/conditions-treatments/infectious-diseases/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19/\)](#)

If you do not develop symptoms within 10 days of the first COVID-19 positive household member leaving recommended isolation, you are no longer considered a household contact.

If you have had COVID-19 before

If you have had COVID-19 before and get symptoms again, what you should do depends on how long it has been since your previous infection.

Count the days from when you tested positive or first had symptoms.

28 days or fewer since last infection

If you are at low risk of serious illness, you do not need to take another test. Stay home and recover until 24 hours after you no longer have symptoms.

If you have an underlying health condition or have COVID-19-like symptoms that are getting worse, get advice from a healthcare provider or call Healthline free on [0800 611 116 \(tel:0800611116\)](tel:0800611116)

29 days or more since last infection

It is recommended that you take a RAT and isolate for 5 days if the result is positive, and follow the advice for people who have COVID-19.

[If you have COVID-19 \(/conditions-treatments/infectious-diseases/covid-19/if-you-have-covid-19/\)](#)