BE COVIDSAFE ✓

COVID-19 Testing Options to Detect a Current Infection

COVID-19 testing allows for early detection of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. Testing helps identify anyone who came into close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19 and can help stop the spread of the virus. Review the information below to learn about available testing options.

	Molecular Test	Antigen Test
Also known as	Reverse Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test.	Rapid-test (though some PCR tests can be done as "rapid tests").
How is the test performed?	A thin flexible swab is inserted into the nose or a saliva sample is collected.	A thin flexible swab is inserted into the nose or throat.
Where is the test available?	Laboratory facilities and point-of-care settings such as health clinics, pharmacies, hospitals, State, and County testing sites.	Laboratory facilities and point-of-care settings such as health clinics and pharmacies. Over-the-counter home self-test kits are available at pharmacies or online.
Is another test needed?	This test is typically accurate and considered the gold standard in detecting the virus, so another test is not usually needed.	Results may need to be confirmed with a molecular test. Positive results are usually accurate, especially in people experiencing symptoms of COVID-19.
How long does it take to obtain test results?	Results are available in approximately 1-3 days.	Results are available in approximately 15–30 minutes.
What does the test cost?	COVID-19 testing may be available at no-cost through your healthcare provider. Free PCR testing is also available at several locations throughout San Diego County.	Typically cost per test can vary between $5-$50, however cost may vary from location to location.

Testing is Recommended if:

- You experience any signs or **symptoms of COVID-19** regardless of vaccination status or prior infection with the virus.
- You have **close contact** with someone with confirmed COVID-19.
- You have not been vaccinated for COVID-19 and were unable to safely distance from others during a recent activity or event and are concerned about **exposure.**
- You have been asked or referred for **testing** by a healthcare provider, or **State**, **tribal**, **local**, or **territorial health department**.

For more information on COVID-19 testing, please visit:

coronavirus-sd.com/testing

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