

## You were tested for COVID-19 at a Community Testing Centre or Mobile Testing Service and meet Higher Index of Suspicion criteria

Thank you for getting tested because you **have symptoms** of COVID-19. These symptoms can be caused by other viruses, like influenza. We only tested you for COVID-19 today. This swab is sent to an Auckland laboratory for testing and **results may take up to 5 days to come back.**

### Do I need to self-isolate?

Because you meet the Higher Index of Suspicion criteria you need to **self-isolate until your test results are available.** There is more information about self-isolation on the back of this information sheet.

In some situations **you may be asked to self-isolate for longer**, up to 14 days. This could be because in the last 14 days you had contact with someone with COVID-19 or you returned from overseas.

Even if you are not required to self-isolate for 14 days, we advise you to stay at home until you are completely well to avoid passing on other infections.

**If you feel worse and need to see a doctor** you should seek medical care. Please **call ahead before seeing a doctor** so they can prepare to see you and to keep themselves and other patients safe. Let the doctor know you have been tested already.

### How will I get my test results?

Negative test results are notified by **text message or email** (or on a landline phone). If you do not receive your results **AFTER 5 DAYS** you can call the NDHB COVID-19 Hotline on 0800 600 720. This phone line is monitored from 8 am to 4.30 pm on weekdays, for test results and information on testing centres only.

### What does a negative test result mean?

This means that COVID-19 was not detected on the swab taken today. It is rare, but some people with COVID-19 can have a negative test result. For example, if they were tested soon after exposure to COVID-19, if they are not very infectious, or if they had a throat swab rather than a swab from the back of their nose. This is why some people are still required to self-isolate for 14 days even with a negative test.

If you become more unwell or have ongoing fevers you should seek medical care. Having a negative test now also does not mean you can't get COVID-19 in the future. If you become unwell again with the symptoms of COVID-19 you should be tested again.

### What does a positive test mean and what will happen next?

A positive result means **you have COVID-19.** Someone from public health will phone to let you know. You will be asked to move into a Quarantine Facility until you are no longer infectious to stop the virus from spreading to others. This will be for at least 10 days and until you are completely well for three days.

Staying in a Quarantine Facility is a Ministry of Health requirement. The closest Quarantine Facility to Northland is located in Auckland. All travel arrangements will be made for you by public health. There is more information about Quarantine Facilities at <https://covid19.govt.nz/>.

Public Health will ask you about all the people (contacts) you have spent time with just before and since you became unwell and will provide those people with advice about testing and self-isolation.

### What are the Higher Index of Suspicion (HIS) criteria?

Within the last 14 days you

- had contact with a COVID-19 case,
- arrived from outside New Zealand,
- had direct contact with someone who has travelled internationally,
- worked in an international aircraft or ship,
- cleaned at international air or maritime port or areas frequently visited by international travellers,
- exited a Managed Isolation or Quarantine facility (excluding people who have recovered from COVID-19),
- were identified by public health as having a higher index of suspicion for other reasons.



## What happens to the information collected about me?

We will only use and disclose your personal information if that is permitted by law. Within the national response to COVID-19 disclosure may occur to your GP; healthcare organisations such as Public Health, and the Ministry of Health; your employer; and your whānau, for example to enable contact tracing.

## Where can you go for more advice?

You can call Healthline on 0800 358 5453 for advice. **Healthline will NOT be able to access your results.**

You can get more information from the Government COVID-19 website here: <https://covid19.govt.nz/>

## What does self-isolation mean?

### 1. Stay at Home

You must stay in your home, or the place you are currently staying, except for getting medical care. Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transport, Uber or taxis until you have been told that is safe to do so. Do not visit people in hospital or attend hospital outpatient appointments.

You will need to ask for help if you require groceries, other shopping or medications. Do not visit a pharmacy yourself. Alternatively, you can order by phone or online. The delivery instruction needs to state that the items are to be left outside, on the porch, or as appropriate for your home. For emergency deliveries you can call 0800 790 791 for support.

### 2. Separate yourself from other people in your home as much as you can

Try and stay away from the other people that you live with as much as possible. We advise that you stay at least 2 meters away from another person. If you live with other people, try to spend time in only a few places like your bed, a chair that is just for you, a seat outside, and the bathroom. Ask those you live with for help and to bring you things.

If you share a home with flatmates or other people that are not your family, with a shared kitchen, bathroom(s) and living area, you should stay in your room with the door closed, only coming out when needed. If you share a kitchen avoid using this while others are using it if you can, and take meals back to your room to eat. If you can, use a dishwasher to wash your used dishes, and keep your things separately from everyone else's.

### 3. Wash your hands lots and for longer

Regular hand washing is the best way to avoid getting COVID-19. This should be done often and thoroughly with soap and water, for at least 20 seconds, rinse and dry thoroughly. Everyone in the home should be encouraged to wash their hands regularly. Try to avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.

### 4. Cover your coughs and sneezes

Cover your mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when you cough or sneeze. Dispose of tissues into a plastic waste bag, and immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, then rinse and dry thoroughly. Carers should wash their hands as well if helping the person they are caring for following coughing or sneezing.

### 5. Avoid sharing household items

Avoid sharing dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items with other people in your home when you have used them. After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water; dishwashers may be used to clean crockery and cutlery.

### 6. Do not have visitors in your home

Do not invite or have visitors to your home. People who drop things off to you should leave them on the doorstep. If it is urgent to speak to someone who you don't live with, do this over the phone.

Dr Catherine Jackson

**Medical Officer of Health**

**NgāTai Ora – Public Health Northland**

Level 1 Factsheet – 6 November 2020