

# COVID-19 Testing at Tohono O'odham Nation Health Care Frequently Asked Questions

## What is COVID-19?

Covid-19 is a disease caused by a virus. Most people will have cough, runny nose, sore throat, and fever. Some persons will develop pneumonia and if severe, may die. COVID-19 was discovered in December 2019 and because it is so new, recommendations about testing, prevention, and treatments are changing rapidly. People are being asked to stay home and out of public areas to prevent getting infected and later spreading COVID-19. People with mild disease should stay home, rest, get plenty of fluids, and stay in a room separated from others to prevent spread.

## Who should get tested?

When COVID-19 first started, access to any testing was extremely limited and very few clinics were able to offer tests. Every week, testing is becoming more available. TONHC now has test kits and will test people based on current recommendations. Doctors and nurses will ask people about their symptoms and risk factors. The symptoms of COVID-19 are generally fever, cough, and difficulty breathing. Risk factors include being in close contact with someone with COVID-19 disease, older age, having certain health conditions, and working or living in high-risk settings.

## Health Risks

- Close contact with a person with COVID-19
- Age >65 years
- Diabetes
- Renal failure or dialysis
- Obesity BMI $\geq$ 40
- Immunocompromised
- Chemotherapy
- Prolonged steroid use
- Pregnancy
- Cancer Treatment
- Organ transplant
- Chronic lung disease, moderate asthma
- Serious heart conditions

## Work and Living Risks

- Healthcare workers
- Nursing homes
- Dorm or group residence
- Jails

### How does the test happen?

Call your clinic and tell them your symptoms. They will help decide if you should be tested. Locations that advertise drive-thru testing will also ask about symptoms to decide if the test is right for you.

### What kind of test is it?

The most common test is called a viral PCR that specifically looks for virus particles. The doctor or nurse doing the test will wear a face shield, mask, gown, and gloves. They will place a thin swab (it looks like a skinny Q-tip) inside one nostril, twirl it around, and place it in a tube. The tube is labeled with your information and sent to a specialized laboratory that can analyze it. Rapid testing is being developed that can be run on site, but these are currently experimental.

### Who gets the results?

A clinic team member will call the patient with results, typically available in 2-7 days. Like all medical tests, this is confidential and only the person getting the test, their health care team, and public health have access to the results.

### What do I do while I am waiting for results?

Your health team should give you home care instructions asking that you:

#### DO NOT:

- Go to work, school, or public areas
- Use public transportation, rideshare, or taxis.
- Share household items like dishes, cups, eating utensils, and bedding.

#### DO:

- Stay at home, except to get essential medical care.
- Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom, if possible.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue or your elbow.
- Wash your hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Cancel all non-essential medical appointments and call ahead to your provider before you attend essential medical appointments.

What do I do while I am waiting for results?

**DO:**

- Monitor your symptoms and seek medical care if your illness is worsening.
- Before going to your medical appointment, call the healthcare provider and tell them that you have, or are being evaluated for, COVID-19
- Assign a person in the home to get groceries and supplies to keep travel to a minimum
- More tips about staying safe at home can be found at:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html>

Where can I get more information about COVID-19?

Get reliable information. Find the most accurate Arizona information at:  
<https://www.azdhs.gov/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/infectious-disease-epidemiology/index.php#novel-coronavirus-faqs>  
The Arizona COVID-19 Hotline is available 24-hours a day. 1-844-542-8201.  
The Tohono O’odham Nation Hotline is available Monday-Friday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm. 1-888-852-7022

