



## Guidance for people tested for COVID-19

As part of Australia's response to COVID-19, public health units around Australia have increased testing. People may have a COVID-19 test for several reasons.

### 'Suspect case' testing

You will be tested as a 'suspect case' if you have symptoms of COVID-19 and in the last 14 days:

- have had close contact with a COVID-19 case
- have been
  - overseas
  - on a cruise ship
  - somewhere in Australia where there is an increased risk of transmission within the community
- have worked in a healthcare or residential care setting and have direct patient contact

If you are a 'suspect case' you must stay home and [isolate](#) until you receive your result.

If you receive a positive test result, you are now a 'confirmed case'. You must continue to isolate until you meet the appropriate release from isolation criteria.

If you test negative and are already required to [quarantine](#), you must:

- stay in quarantine for the remainder of the 14-day period or
- stay in quarantine until released by your doctor or the local public health unit.

If you test negative but still have symptoms you should stay home until these resolve.

If you have symptoms and have had close contact with a COVID-19 case, but initially tested negative, you should be re-tested.

### Enhanced testing

At present, if you are not a 'suspect case', you can also be tested if:

1. You have certain symptoms, including symptoms of respiratory infection.
2. You do not have symptoms but live or work in a high-risk setting where there is a COVID-19 outbreak.
3. You are an organ donor or recipient.
4. You do not have symptoms and are a returned traveller in hotel quarantine.

This will help prevent spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases and will help protect our community. See [How to protect yourself and others](#).

### I had a test for COVID-19 under the enhanced testing procedures. What can I do while waiting for the result?

If you are unwell you should stay home until you are well. You must also stay home until you receive a negative test result.

If you are a close contact of a confirmed case or are in hotel quarantine, you must stay in quarantine.

If you are an organ donor or recipient and do not have any symptoms or risk of having COVID-19 you do not need to isolate while waiting for the results.

### My test for COVID-19 under the enhanced testing procedures was positive, what now?

If your test for COVID-19 is positive you are now a 'confirmed case.' You must isolate until you are officially released from isolation. Your doctor or the local public health unit will advise you.

### My test for COVID-19 under the enhanced testing procedures was negative, what now?

If your test for COVID-19 is negative and you have cold or flu symptoms, you should stay home until you feel well.

### My test for COVID-19 under the suspect case procedures was negative, what now?

If your test for COVID-19 is negative and you are a close contact of a confirmed case or a returned traveller in quarantine you must stay in quarantine for the full 14 days. You will be advised by public health authorities when you can leave.

### My test for COVID-19 under the enhanced testing procedures was negative but I still have symptoms, what should I do?

COVID-19 symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat and shortness of breath. These are common in other viral respiratory infections.

When there are few cases of COVID-19 in your community, it is more likely that another respiratory virus is the cause of your symptoms.

However, if your symptoms worsen, change, last longer than expected, or if you are concerned you should seek medical advice.

Your doctor will assess your risk and will consider a number of factors including:

- your history, symptoms and possible exposures
- the number of COVID-19 cases in the local community
- the setting where you live, work or visit.

On the basis of that assessment, your doctor may ask you to have another COVID-19 test. While you are unwell you should stay home until your acute symptoms resolve.