

# My Emergency Preparedness Guide

## A Guide for COVID-19 Testing During the Pandemic

### COVID-19 Tests

There are COVID-19 tests available for current infections and testing to determine possible past infection with the disease. A viral test can tell if the person has a current infection. There are two types of viral tests: antigen testing and nucleic acid amplification tests (NAATs). An antibody test may be able to determine if an individual has a current infection.

### Who Should Get Tested

- People with symptoms of COVID-19.** There are a variety of symptoms associated with COVID-19, such as cough, sore throat, fever, chills, recent loss of taste or smell, fatigue, muscle aches, body aches, headache, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea.
- People that have close contact** with someone who has been confirmed as having COVID-19. Close contact is defined as being within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period.
- People who have taken part in activities that put them at a higher risk for COVID-19** because physical distancing cannot be achieved to avoid exposure. This includes poorly ventilated areas, large or social gatherings, as well as travel.
- People who have been asked or referred to get tested** by a healthcare provider's state, federal, and local health department or other government agencies.

### Diagnostic Testing

- Rapid Point of Care Tests.** These are tests that use a mucus sample from the nose or throat but can be analyzed at the doctor's office, clinic, or wherever the sample was collected. Results may be obtained within minutes. These tests can be an antigen or molecular.

### Get Tested If

- Symptoms occur
- Close contact exposure occurs
- Engaged in high-risk activity
- Directed by your healthcare provider

- Saliva Tests.** A person is allowed to spit into a tube in lieu of a nasal or throat swab. This test may be more comfortable for some people.
- At-Home Collections.** This type of test must be prescribed by a physician. It allows the sample to be collected at home and sent directly to a lab.
- Molecular Diagnostic Tests.** Diagnosis from these tests are based on the genetic material of COVID-19. Results take several days.

### Getting Tested

- COVID-19 tests are available at no cost nationwide at community health centers and selected pharmacies. Please check with your doctor or local health department.  
<https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/pages/symptoms-testing>
- When getting ready to go for your vaccination please keep on hand anti-fever medications such as Tylenol, Advil, Motrin and Benadryl or other allergy medications. In addition, ginger ale, Gatorade, or Pedialyte may be beneficial.  
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

## Your Emergency Supply Kit

In addition to your emergency kit, be sure to keep these items on hand for emergencies:



**Water** – one gallon of water per person, per day for at least three days



**Soap** – for frequent hand washing



**Battery Powered Radio** – and extra batteries



**Flashlight** – and extra batteries



**First Aid Kit** – one gallon of water per person, per day for at least three days



**Whistle** – to signal for help



**Dust Mask** – or cotton T-shirt, to help filter contaminated air



**Plastic Sheeting and Duct Tape** – to shelter-in-place



**Wrench or Pliers** – to turn off utilities when necessary



**Can Opener** – to open canned food



**Infant Formula and Diapers** – if you have an infant



**Local Maps** – including a map of your area and a map for where you plan to go if you are evacuated



**Food** – at least a three-day supply of nonperishable food

## Other Considerations Following an Emergency or During a Pandemic

- Inspect your medication to see if the look or smell has changed; excessive moisture or heat can damage medications or make them less effective. If you are unsure about the safety of your medication, contact a local pharmacist or your healthcare provider.
- If you have not been able to take your medication, contact a doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible — even if you are not experiencing any negative health effects. Never take additional doses to make up for those you have missed before talking to a healthcare practitioner. Do not take medications that were not prescribed to you or share your medications with others.

## More Information and Online Resources

- [www.MDEmergencyPrepNetwork.org](http://www.MDEmergencyPrepNetwork.org)
- [preparedness.health.maryland.gov](http://preparedness.health.maryland.gov)
- [mema.maryland.gov](http://mema.maryland.gov)
- [mncha.org](http://mncha.org)
- <https://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>
- [BeforeItsTooLateMD.org](http://BeforeItsTooLateMD.org)  
*Maryland's statewide effort to bring awareness to the heroin, opioid, and fentanyl crisis*

Provided in partnership by the Maryland Department of Health  
Office of Preparedness and Response and the Maryland-National Capital Homecare Association



WRITE THE NAME AND PHONE NUMBER OF YOUR HOME CARE/HOSPICE COMPANY IN THIS BOX.