



**Where Your Doctor Works for YOU!**

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## **CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19): TESTING**

Currently, access to testing still remains extremely limited for persons not critically ill in a hospital.

There are not yet anywhere near enough tests - or the protective gear and supplies to perform the test - to serve the needs of the public, including healthcare workers, first responders, and high-risk/vulnerable patients needing testing. This is a complex problem throughout the US, and medical professionals are working closely with public health officials, and the manufacturers of tests and supplies, to increase access to testing as quickly as possible.

For now, we make the best decisions we can, based on each person's unique story and symptoms. **Care and treatment is exactly the same whether a person has been tested or not.**

Two types of tests exist - neither one is widely available yet):

- The test to see if a person has active COVID-19 in their body, and could be contagious to others, is a swab taken through the nose from deep inside the sinuses. It takes anywhere from 1-15 days to get results. This test requires a specially-trained healthcare professional to be suited up in specialized protective gear, and is NOT available at outpatient labs. Limited access to these tests is prioritized by:
  - Critically Sick Hospitalized Patients, then
  - Healthcare Workers with Symptoms, then
  - Symptomatic and over age 65, or with High-Risk Health Conditions, then
  - Symptomatic First Responders / Critical Infrastructure / Caregivers of Vulnerable Persons
- Coming Soon: There is also an Antibody test to see who may have already had the virus in their body. This fingerstick blood test with rapid (10-15 minute) results was recently approved for use, but is not yet available. It is also not a perfect test - it still has a high error rate, and it cannot yet tell the difference between recent exposure and early immune response, versus previous exposure still contagious, versus fully recovered with some immunity.



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