

COVID-19 Testing

Thank you for getting tested. Your results will be reported to you on the SPH patient portal, accessed via the email address you provided. If your test is positive, you will be contacted via phone. Results can take up to 5 days. Call (907) 235-0235 if you need assistance.

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What to do while waiting for your results:

If you are being tested because of symptoms:

- Stay at home until your test results are back (except to get medical care). Avoid all public places and public transportation.
- Keep at least 6 feet from people and animals, including those in your household and continue to wear a mask.
- Avoid sharing personal household items, wash your hands and high touch surfaces regularly.
- Inform your work (or your child's school) that you are awaiting results.

If you are being tested because you are a close contact:

- You may need to quarantine. See following pages for additional information.

If you are being tested for screening purposes:

- Continue to wear a mask, wash your hands and stay 6 feet apart from others.
- Unvaccinated international travelers should quarantine for 7 days in addition to testing.

If your test is positive:

Most people do well, but it is important to take care of your health and protect those around you. **You will receive a phone call and be given additional information.** Please let your provider know as soon as possible of your result to discuss treatment options which may reduce illness severity. **Stay home, avoid all public places and transportation** (except to seek medical care), avoid sharing personal household items (including the restroom), wash your hands and high

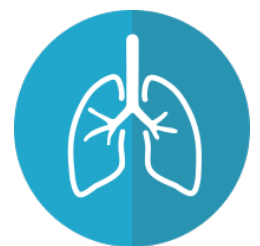


touch surfaces regularly. Inform your work (or your child's school) that you are positive. Wear a face covering if your symptoms allow, even in the house when not in a separate bedroom. Designate one household member to bring you food and other necessities. If you need non-medical help (e.g., groceries or other support) call 2-1-1 or 1-800-478-2221. Also see **local resources page 5**. Please see **page 3 for instruction on notifying close contacts.**

Isolation Period: Stay home for at least **5 days** starting with day 0 as the day your symptoms began, or the day you received your POSITIVE test if you are asymptomatic. If you have no symptoms or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house. Stay home **until your fever resolves** without the use of fever reducing medication. **Continue to wear a mask** around others for 5 additional days. **Note:** people who are moderately to severely ill with COVID-19 may require longer isolation period.



Breathing Exercise: Deep breathing can help open up your lung tissue and make you feel better as you recover. Lie or sit with your back straight and put one hand on your chest and the other over your belly button. Breathe in slowly through your nose while pushing your belly button outward. Hold your breath for a few seconds, then slowly exhale. Repeat for a full minute. Consider having someone get you a pulse oximeter at a local pharmacy to check your oxygen saturation level. If your oxygen reading is **below 94% when you are resting**, contact your primary care provider or go to the ER.



Pregnancy considerations: Pregnant patients are at high risk for developing severe COVID-19. Contact your OBGYN or family doctor at the onset of your isolation period for additional monitoring and instructions.

Pediatric considerations: COVID-19 is generally milder in children than adults. Almost half of children will have an asymptomatic infection.

Medically complex children are at increased risk of severe COVID. COVID-19 infection is associated with a rare, but potentially severe inflammatory syndrome called **Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome**, a serious condition that causes severe inflammation of multiple organs including the heart, lungs, blood vessels, kidneys, digestive system, brain, skin, or eyes. Signs and symptoms depend on which areas of the body are affected. Contact your child's doctor for any concerning symptoms including ongoing fever, stomach pain, blood shot eyes, diarrhea, dizziness or lightheadedness, skin rash, or vomiting.

Preventing reinfection: Extensive research from many countries confirms that the best protection against a second bout of COVID-19 infection is to get vaccinated. You can be vaccinated as soon as you are out of isolation (usually 10 days), unless you receive MAB treatment, in which case you need to wait 3 months. Call the SPH Testing & Vaccine Clinic at (907) 235-0235 to make a vaccination appointment.

Seek immediate medical care if you develop concerning symptoms, including:

- difficulty breathing
- bluish gray or whitish lips or face
- pain or pressure in the chest
- severe, constant dizziness or light-headedness
- confusion
- difficulty waking up
- slurred speech

MAB Information:

What are monoclonal antibody COVID-19 treatments?

Monoclonal antibodies are like your body's own antibodies, as they help your immune system quickly destroy the COVID-19 virus before it harms you or causes hospitalization. Fortunately, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has authorized monoclonal antibody treatment for eligible patients.

If you test positive for COVID-19, have symptoms, or are unvaccinated and have had a known exposure, talk to a healthcare provider right away. Monoclonal antibody treatment must be given as soon as possible within 10 days of symptom onset. Treatment is usually given through a one-time IV infusion.

Who can receive monoclonal antibodies?

You may be eligible for monoclonal antibody treatment if you have had mild to moderate symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 10 days, have tested positive for COVID-19, and have an underlying medical condition. You may also be eligible for treatment if you are unvaccinated and have had a known exposure to a positive case. If you are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 but have tested positive for the virus and are considered high-risk, you may still be eligible for treatment. Talk with a healthcare provider to see if monoclonal antibody treatment is right for you. A referral is needed to receive treatment.

You are not eligible for treatment if you: are hospitalized due to COVID-19, require oxygen therapy due to COVID-19, or require an increase in baseline oxygen flow rate due to COVID-19 for those on chronic oxygen therapy due to an underlying non-COVID-19 related health issue.

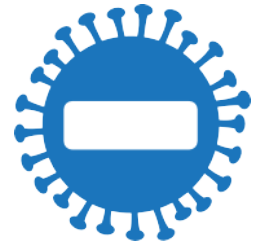
If you do not have a local provider, call:

- Homer Medical Center - (907) 235-8586
- SVT Health and Wellness - (907) 226-2228
- Kachemak Medical Group - (907) 235-7000
- Ninilchik Clinic - (907) 567-3970
- SPH Family Care Clinic - (907) 235-9000



If your test result is negative:

This test shows your result at this moment in time. It offers no protection from future infection. Continue to take steps to protect yourself. You should not be around others until you are feeling better and are fever free for at least 24 hours.



Contact tracing:

The sooner people know about possible exposure, the quicker they can quarantine and get tested if needed. This will help prevent COVID-19 from spreading and help keep schools and businesses open. If your test is positive (even if you are vaccinated), please notify your own close contacts.

Close contacts are anyone who was within 6 feet of you for a total of 15 minutes or more over 24 hours during the two days prior to when your symptoms started, or when you were tested, whichever is earlier - this is considered the "infectious period".

Use the template below to help you with contact tracing.

Start by filling in the date your symptoms started, or if you have not experienced any symptoms, write in the date of your test. Then, go back two days: this is the time frame that you would be infectious and should alert others of our results. Include all days until you were able to isolate from other people.

2 days before symptoms (or test date if no symptoms)	1 day before symptoms (or test date if no symptoms)	Date Symptoms Started (or test date if no symptoms)	Days after symptoms (or test date) until you were able to isolate from others
Date:	Date:	Date:	Dates:
Contact names:	Contact names:	Contact names:	Contact names:

What to do if *you* are a close contact to a confirmed case:

If you are **unvaccinated or are more than six months out from your second mRNA dose (or more than 2 months after the J&J vaccine) and not yet boosted:** Quarantine for 5 days followed by strict mask use for an additional 5 days. Test on day five or if you develop symptoms.

If you are vaccinated and boosted: You do not need to quarantine following an exposure, but should wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure. Test on day 5 after last exposure or if you develop symptoms.

Regardless of vaccination status: If you have been exposed, test immediately if exposure has been ongoing, or on day 2-3 for one time exposure, and again at day 5 after last exposure to the infectious person. If symptoms occur, test immediately and stay home until a negative test confirms symptoms are not attributable to COVID-19.

If you have ongoing exposure to someone with COVID-19:

It is very important for people with COVID-19 to remain apart from you, even if you are living together. If you are unable to separate from the person with COVID-19 in the home, you will have an **ongoing exposure**, meaning you will be repeatedly exposed until that person is no longer able to spread the virus to other people.

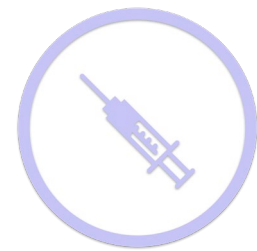


People with COVID-19 can spread the virus to other people before or after they develop symptoms. The person with COVID-19 and all members of the household should wear a well-fitted mask inside the home. If possible, **only one member of the household should care for the person with COVID-19** to limit the number of people in the household that are in close contact with the infected person.

- A person with COVID-19 is considered infectious starting 2 days before they develop symptoms, or 2 days before the date of their positive test if they do not have symptoms.
- Wear a mask when in contact with the person with COVID-19 throughout the infected person's isolation period.
- Get tested immediately when you are identified as a close contact.
- Get tested again 5 days after the end of isolation of the infected household member.
- Isolate and test immediately if you develop symptoms of COVID-19.

If you are fully vaccinated and boosted and have an ongoing exposure to someone with COVID-19, you should:

- Wear a mask indoors in public for 10 days after last exposure to the infectious person.
- Test on day 5 after last exposure.



If you are unvaccinated or not fully vaccinated and boosted and have ongoing exposure to COVID-19:

- Wear a mask when in contact with other people in the home until quarantine ends.
- Quarantine for 5 days after last exposure. Test on day 5. After that continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

If multiple people you live with test positive for COVID-19 at different times: Please contact Public Health at (907) 235-8857 or the SPH COVID Care Site at (907) 235-0235 for guidance.



Additional guidance for those in health care settings:

Asymptomatic health care workers with a higher-risk exposure, and patients with close contact with someone with SARS-CoV-2 infection, should have a series of two viral tests for SARS-CoV-2 infection regardless of vaccination status. In these situations, testing is recommended immediately (but not earlier than 2 days after the exposure) and, if negative, again 5 days after the exposure.

How do I get my results?

You must visit the SPH online patient portal in order to get your test results. You can also download and print the test results from your portal for your records as soon as they're available.

Please note: the SPH patient portal is not the same as the Homer Medical Center and clinic patient portal.

- It can take up to 5 days before your results are ready. Turnaround time varies based upon a variety of variables including current availability of testing supplies. Test results will be available as soon as we have them. **Anyone with a positive test will be called as soon as we know you are positive.** If your test comes back negative, you will not receive a call and will need to check the online portal for results.
- **Within 24 hours of your visit today you should receive an email with a link to sign up for the portal.** Please check your spam folders. *If you have signed up for our patient portal in the past, you don't have to wait for an email.* Just visit thrivepatientportal.com and enter your username and password. You can also access the patient portal at sphosp.org under the "For Patients" tab. If you forgot your password, click "Forgot Password" to have it reset.
- If you have questions or need assistance, please call the patient portal helpline at 907-235-0881. This line is staffed Mon-Fri from 8AM-3PM. If forwarded to a voice message, clearly say your name, date of birth, email address, and a call back number. You will be emailed a registration link as soon as possible. If you need assistance outside of those hours, please call the SPH COVID Testing & Vaccine Clinic at 907-235-0235.

The information in this handout is sourced from the CDC and Alaska DHSS, with adaptations from the CPH patient education handout.

Local resources:

Prescriptions:

Safeway Pharmacy....(907) 226-1060

Ulmer's Pharmacy....(907) 235-8594 (offers curbside pick-up). **Website:** ulmerspharmacyak.com

Food/Groceries:

Save-U-More....(907) 235-8661 (offers curbside pick-up)

Safeway....(907) 226-1000 (offers curbside pick-up)

Homer Food Pantry...907-235-1968 (can deliver within Homer city limits; call ahead for contactless pick-up). **Website:** homerfoodpantry.org

BOOSTING IMMUNITY:

FUNCTIONAL MEDICINE TIPS ON PREVENTION & OPTIMIZING IMMUNE FUNCTION DURING THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK

The Institute for Functional Medicine has outlined several steps that you can take to reduce your chances of being exposed to respiratory virus and to boost your immunity in the event of exposure. The following information outlines what you can do to help keep yourself and your family safe.

LIFESTYLE

Stress reduction: Chronic stress can negatively alter immune system responses, making you more likely to get sick. Identify your personal stress reduction strategies and practice them regularly.

Sleep: Sleep has a big influence on immune function, so it is essential to get plenty of sleep. Practice good sleep hygiene and maintain consistent sleep hours—turn off screens, ensure the room is cool, quiet, and dark, and set a reminder to help yourself go to bed on time.

Exercise: Moderate, regular physical activity helps to boost immune system function by raising levels of infection-fighting white blood cells and antibodies, increasing circulation, and decreasing stress hormones. Establish and follow an exercise program to not only help prevent respiratory infections but also to improve cognitive and physical resilience.

Nutritious foods/diet: Research indicates that brightly colored vegetables and fruits boost immunity better than most supplements. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables—aim for 10 servings per day. Include fermented vegetables or other probiotic-containing foods.

NATURAL MEANS OF BOOSTING IMMUNITY

Most over-the-counter medications only treat the *symptoms* of viral infections; most don't actually help the immune system fight the infection. Although there is no research to determine what is effective specifically for coronavirus, the following are some natural modalities you can utilize to both address symptoms as well as boost your immune system if you do come down with an illness:

Self-care: When battling upper respiratory infections, top priorities are plentiful hydration and rest. Drink plenty of fluids; homemade vegetable or bone broths are also extremely beneficial. Various herbal teas/hot drinks can help with hydration and reducing symptoms; good choices include peppermint, ginger, eucalyptus, chamomile, and hot water with lemon, honey, and cinnamon.

Sore throats: Salt water gargles are excellent for loosening mucus and helping fend off bacterial throat infections. Hot teas and lozenges containing slippery elm are excellent demulcents (to relieve minor pain and inflammation of mucous membranes) for soothing irritated sore throats. Two tablespoons of honey in hot water can also help to soothe and decrease throat inflammation and pain. Chamomile and peppermint teas are also helpful for soothing irritated sore throats, as are teas or infusions made from marshmallow root and licorice root, both of which can act as soothing demulcents.

Respiratory congestion & sinuses: For respiratory congestion, use a humidifier, vaporizers, or steam inhalers, or spend time in steamy baths or showers. Vaporizers and inhalers can also be used with decongestants or essential oils such as eucalyptus, menthol, peppermint, or frankincense. Nasal xylitol sprays are very beneficial, as is nasal irrigation using a neti pot or nasal irrigation bottle. Buffered saline is easy to make or can be purchased in packets and eliminates any irritation to delicate, irritated mucous membranes.

SUPPLEMENTS, NUTRIENTS, AND FOODS TO SUPPORT IMMUNE FUNCTION

There are several nutrients, plant-based botanicals, and supplements that can boost immune function and provide symptom relief during illness and may help to shorten the duration of illness. For preventing and treating viral upper respiratory infections, consider some of the following:

Vitamin C: Vitamin C may help to prevent infections, including those caused by bacteria and viruses. Regularly administered vitamin C has been shown to shorten the duration of colds, and higher doses of vitamin C during an illness can also act as a natural antihistamine and anti-inflammatory.

Vitamin D: Vitamin D, known as the “sunshine vitamin,” is one of the most important and powerful nutrients for supporting the immune system. Numerous studies have shown that it helps reduce the risk of colds and flu. Unfortunately, a high percentage of the population is deficient, so daily supplementation (ideally in the form of vitamin D3) offers the best protection.

Vitamin A: For short-term use and particularly for those with moderate vitamin A deficiency, supplementation can be extremely helpful in supporting the body’s ability to fight infections, particularly with regard to respiratory infections.

Zinc: Zinc plays a significant role in boosting immunity. Often available as lozenges, zinc can help to reduce the frequency of infections as well as the duration and severity of the common cold when taken within 24 hours of onset.

Selenium: Selenium, a key nutrient for immune function, is also an antioxidant that helps boost the body’s defenses against bacteria, viruses, and cancer cells. It may particularly help to protect against certain strains of flu virus. Selenium is easily obtained from foods, with the richest source being Brazil nuts.

Honey: Honey, preferably raw, is a good demulcent (it relieves minor pain and inflammation of mucous membranes), has antioxidant properties, and has some antimicrobial effects. It is helpful for coughs and sore throats and can be added to hot tea.

Garlic: Garlic contains a variety of compounds that can influence immunity. Some studies have shown that both fresh garlic as well as aged garlic extract and some other garlic supplements may reduce viral upper respiratory infection severity as well as function in the prevention of infection with viruses that can cause colds.

Probiotics: Probiotics contain “good bacteria” that not only support the health of the gut but also influence immune system functioning and regulation. Studies have shown that probiotic use can decrease the number of respiratory infections, particularly in children.

Please note: Due to the novelty of COVID-19, no peer-reviewed research has been published regarding the effectiveness of dietary or lifestyle interventions for its prevention or treatment. *This document is only intended to identify modalities that may boost your immune system. It is not meant to recommend any treatments, nor have any of these modalities been proven effective against coronavirus. Always consult your physician or healthcare provider prior to using any of these modalities. For up-to-date information on COVID-19, please consult the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov.

Source: This information was taken directly from the Institute for Functional Medicine at www.ifm.org/news-insights/boosting-immunity-functional-medicine-tips-prevention-immunity-boosting-covid-19-coronavirus-outbreak/

