**Key messages**

* To stop the spread of the virus remember Hands. Face. Space: wash your hands regularly, use a face covering when social distancing is not possible and try to keep your distance from those not in your household.
* There is now very high demand for coronavirus tests and it is vital we test people with symptoms to help stop the spread of the virus.

***If you have covid symptoms, you must get a test.***

***If you don’t have symptoms, don’t get a test.***

***We all need to play our part to protect the NHS Test and Trace service for those who really need it.***

* A recent survey at testing sites found a quarter of people turning up did not have symptoms. If you don’t have coronavirus symptoms, and have not been advised to take a test by a doctor or a public health professional or by your local council, you should not be booking a test. Healthcare professionals will be checking those for symptoms at testing sites.
* If you have any coronavirus symptoms you must isolate immediately for 10 days (don’t wait for a test or a test result before doing so)
* If you are identified as a contact of a positive case you must isolate for the full 14 days (even if for some reason you got a negative test during that period)

**You should NOT get tested:**

If you have returned from abroad or are about to travel, you are returning to the workplace, you have been in contact with a confirmed case or if another member of your household has symptoms. You may be advised to isolate if you have been in contact with a confirmed but you should only get a test if you have symptoms.

By following these simple rules, we can ensure people who need a test can get one.

**When to get a test or not:**

* Only get a test if you have coronavirus symptoms or have been asked to get tested a doctor or a public health professional or by your local council. The main symptoms of coronavirus are a high temperature, a new, continuous cough and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste. Most people with coronavirus have at least one of these symptoms.
* Do not use this service to get a test in order to travel to another country. We do not provide certificates for travel purposes. You can pay for a private test.
* If your employer, school, or travel company has asked for evidence of a negative coronavirus test result, we are unable to provide this service. You should only get tested if you have symptoms.
* If someone in your household starts to have symptoms, then they must get tested and the rest of your household should self-isolate with them whilst they wait for the results. If you or other members of the household don’t have symptoms, then you should not get a test – only people with symptoms should get tested. Most people who are tested in person get their results the next day. [Full guidance on self-isolation is available on gov.uk](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fcovid-19-stay-at-home-guidance%2Fstay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection&data=02%7C01%7CSusan.Hopkins%40phe.gov.uk%7Cba69378c755342da8bd908d858a083e2%7Cee4e14994a354b2ead475f3cf9de8666%7C0%7C0%7C637356793712913177&sdata=dJO0Y3i9JO4QzepYSi7Cg90lSw0s%2FKrtPpcaKeR4kKw%3D&reserved=0).
* If you have been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus you should not get tested unless you have coronavirus symptoms. A negative test result does not change the period of time that you will be required to self-isolate.
* If you have been abroad and are quarantining, you should not get tested unless you have coronavirus symptoms. A negative test result does not change the period of time that you will be required to quarantine.
* Do not stockpile tests. If you develop symptoms in future you will be able to book a test. There is no need to order a test in case of future use.
* If you have symptoms and need to book a test, you can do this online or by ringing 119. Do not call 111 which is an urgent care service and cannot help with tests.

**For organisations and employers:**

* Schools: please follow the official [guidance on testing](https://eur01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.gov.uk%2Fgovernment%2Fpublications%2Fletter-from-phe-and-nhs-test-and-trace-to-school-and-college-leaders&data=02%7C01%7CSusan.Hopkins%40phe.gov.uk%7Cba69378c755342da8bd908d858a083e2%7Cee4e14994a354b2ead475f3cf9de8666%7C0%7C0%7C637356793712923171&sdata=%2FHXKS2kUHvdSzY44JsblXiEd5m0v6yqZFlcFcgVRmRk%3D&reserved=0). It is very important that this guidance is followed. Schools should not advise pupils or teachers to take a test unless they exhibit one or more of the listed symptoms. If there is a confirmed case then schools should not advise entire classes or year groups to get tested. Only those with symptoms or those advised by their clinician or Local Authority should get a test. Schools must not require students without symptoms to provide evidence of a negative test before letting them back to school.
* Employers: you should not be asking members of staff to get tested before they come into the workplace. You can also help by communicating the guidance around testing to your staff.
* Travel companies: you should not be directing clients to NHS Test and Trace to get a test for anything related to overseas travel.