






COVID-19 testing options: what are the differences?



This factsheet explains the various services that offer COVID-19 testing. Your GP may also offer testing at their practice – please speak to your GP receptionist before you visit.

	Respiratory Clinics (funded by Aust Govt) – free, seen by a GP 	NSW Health COVID-19 Clinics – free, test only 	Drive-through pathology collection – test only, cost covered by Medicare, referral may be needed 	COVID-19 pathology collection centres – test only, free, referral may be needed 	DIY self-collection test kit at your home – test only, cost covered by Medicare 
What to expect	<p>Can test for COVID-19, plus other respiratory illnesses like flu and pneumonia. Will assess people with mild to moderate respiratory symptoms including a fever, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat and/or tiredness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spend time with a GP or nurse. Receive advice about managing respiratory symptoms. The clinic will advise you of your results and can send a copy to your GP. 	<p>Unlike GP respiratory clinics, these only test for COVID-19, not other respiratory illnesses. You can be tested here if you have a fever, cough, sore throat or shortness of breath and meet the current testing criteria. Walk-ins accepted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get tested by a nurse. Receive test results via SMS. You will be contacted as a priority if you test positive. You will need to contact your GP for advice on managing your respiratory symptoms. 	<p>You can get tested at a drive-through pathology collection service if you are a low-risk patient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call the pathology provider to check if you need a referral. Remain in your vehicle while throat and nasal swabs are taken by a pathology collector. Results will be sent straight to you, or to your referring doctor who can provide advice on managing your respiratory symptoms. 	<p>You can get tested at a COVID-19 pathology centre if you are a low-risk patient.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Call the pathology provider to check if you need a referral. Have throat and nasal swabs taken by a pathology collector. Results will be sent straight to you, or to your referring doctor who can provide advice on managing your respiratory symptoms. 	<p>Ask your GP about self-collection home testing. You cannot self-collect if you are unable to take a good-quality sample or need a clearance test for employment or medicolegal reasons.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow the instructions from the test kit provider. Results will be sent to your referring doctor.
Accepts low-risk people (mildly unwell)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Accepts people with mild-moderate symptoms	✓	✓			✓
Appointment required	✓		✓	✓	
Referral/pathology request form required from your GP			✓	✓	✓
Advice available on managing your symptoms	✓				
Locations, bookings (if applicable) and other details	Click here	Click here	Click here	Click here	Click here

IMPORTANT: After your COVID-19 test, you must self-isolate until you receive an ‘all ok’ (known as a ‘negative’) result. When you get tested you will receive more information about self-isolating.