

# Choose the right COVID-19 test

You can use a home antigen test in most situations for quick, reliable results.

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic, PCR tests were almost always used to detect the virus. Over the past 2 years, more and better antigen testing options have become available, making it easier and faster to get test results at home.

## Most situations

### Home antigen tests are best for when you:

- **Have symptoms** (retest after 24 to 48 hours if the first test result is negative)
- **Have been exposed to someone who tested positive** (test 5 days after exposure if no symptoms)
- **Plan to travel, attend a gathering, or spend time with people who are at risk for serious illness**
- **Need to show a negative test result for return to work** (employer policies may vary)

KP members can visit [kp.org/covidtesting](https://kp.org/covidtesting) to get the test you need, including no-cost home antigen tests delivered to your door.



## Limited situations

### PCR tests are recommended when you:

- **Are directed to get this test by your doctor**
- **Are attending an event or activity that specifically requires a negative PCR test result**



### What to do with a positive COVID-19 test result:

- 1 Stay home, isolate, and share your positive test result with Kaiser Permanente on [kp.org](https://kp.org).
- 2 End isolation\* after 5 full days if symptoms are improving and no fever for 24 hours. California requires a negative test to end isolation at 5 days. Otherwise, 10 days of isolation is required.
- 3 Wear a well-fitting mask around others and avoid travel for 10 full days.

\* Follow public health and employer recommendations before returning to normal activity. Further CDC guidance can be found at [cdc.gov: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html)