



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH AND
EMERGENCY SERVICES

COVID-19 Tested!

Now what?

If you have COVID-19 symptoms, and are a contact of a case OR have travelled outside of Canada:

- Due to your potential exposure to COVID-19, you must self-isolate while awaiting your test result.
- If your test result is negative, continue to self-isolate for 14 days from your last contact to a positive case or from your arrival back to Ontario.
- If your test result is positive, self-isolate from 14 days from when your symptoms started. Region of Waterloo Public Health will provide guidance on your isolation period.

If you have no symptoms, but are a contact of a case OR have travelled outside of Canada:

- Self-isolate for 14 days after your last contact with the positive case or after your arrival back in Ontario, even if your test result is negative. If you develop symptoms, get retested as soon as possible.
- If your test result is positive, self-isolate for 14 days from the day you were tested. If you develop symptoms, you may need to self-isolate for longer. Region of Waterloo Public Health will provide guidance on your isolation period.

If you have symptoms, but are not a contact of a case and have not travelled outside of Canada:

- Self-isolate while you are waiting for your test results.
- If your test is positive, continue to self-isolate for 14 days from when your symptoms started.
- If your test is negative, you may stop self-isolating after you are symptom-free for 24 hours.

If you have no symptoms, are not a contact of a case and have not travelled outside of Canada:

- You are not required to self-isolate while waiting for your test results.
- If your test result is positive, self-isolate for 14 days from when you were tested. If you develop symptoms, you may need to self-isolate for longer. Region of Waterloo Public Health will provide guidance on your isolation period.
- If your test result is negative, get retested if you develop symptoms.

How to get your test results?

- Visit ontario.ca/COVID19 and click "Check your lab results".
- Your results may also be available through other laboratory online portals you already subscribe to, e.g. Life Labs, Dynacare.
- A test result will usually be available in **5-7 days. If you have not received your test results 7 days after being tested you may contact your family doctor or Public Health for assistance.**
- If your test is positive you will be contacted by Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services. A Public Health nurse will call you each day and will advise you when you can stop self-isolation.

What does a negative test mean?

- If your test is negative, it means that the virus was not detected at the time your sample was collected. This does not mean you will not get sick. It also does not mean that you will not test positive for or become sick, or be exposed to COVID-19 at any time after your test.
- The test result only means that you did not have detectable COVID-19 **at the time of testing**.
- To prevent becoming infected with COVID-19, physical distance from others, wear a mask when physical distancing is not possible, wash your hands often and monitor for symptoms of COVID-19

What does a positive test mean if you don't have symptoms?

- The test is very effective at detecting any virus. Even if a person with COVID-19 has fully recovered and is no longer contagious, they may still test positive.
- The significance of a positive test if you have never had symptoms is still unknown. You should self-isolate and monitor for symptoms as directed by Region of Waterloo Public Health and Emergency Services.

Can the test determine if you had COVID-19 in the past?

- No. This is not an antibody/serology test. This swab test only determines if you have detectable COVID-19 at the time the test is collected. Currently, antibody/serology tests are not yet available in Ontario.

Self-care while isolating

- Stay home except to get medical care.
- Get rest and stay hydrated.
- Keep your area well ventilated, if possible open windows and avoid tobacco or other smoke. For support to quit/reduce smoking, talk to your health care provider and refer to “Ways to quit smoking” at regionofwaterloo.ca/smoking
- Stay connected with friends and family by phone or computer.
- For more resources and information on:
 - How to self-isolate and manage stress visit regionofwaterloo.ca/COVID19
 - Community supports visit regionofwaterloo.ca/COVID19communitysupport

More about COVID-19

- Some people can be infected and stay symptom-free. Some can test positive and then develop symptoms.
- The majority of COVID-19 cases will be mild.
- If you suffer from chronic diseases like diabetes, heart or lung disease, or if you are 70 years of age or older, you are at greater risk for more serious and severe illness.
- Whether asymptomatic or ill, you are considered infectious and can still pass the virus on to someone else until you have been cleared by a Public Health nurse.
- It is important to monitor your symptoms. If your symptoms are worsening, and you are concerned, contact your health care provider or Telehealth at 1-866-797-0000.
- If you need urgent medical attention, for example, if you have: severe difficulty breathing, severe chest pain, confusion, or loss of consciousness, call 911 and tell them you have tested positive for COVID-19.

For more information, call Region of Waterloo Public Health at 519-575-4400 or visit regionofwaterloo.ca/COVID19