

COVID-19 Testing in Nursing Homes

Protecting Against COVID-19

Ohio has seen outbreaks of COVID-19 in congregate settings including, but not limited to, nursing homes. Nursing homes have been aggressive in testing and managing COVID-19 as they continue to see the dramatic impact of the virus on their residents. With many COVID-19 deaths representing this population, accelerated testing is needed.

The following steps are being implemented to ramp up COVID-19 testing of residents and staff of nursing homes to better prevent the spread of the disease among some of Ohio's most vulnerable residents.

- The Director's Order for the Testing of the Residents and Staff of all Nursing Homes was signed by Amy Acton, M.D., MPH to protect nursing homes residents and staff during this COVID-19 pandemic.
 - a. Each nursing home facility licensed by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) or certified by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), or the Ohio Department of Medicaid shall cooperate with COVID-19 testing for residents and staff. This includes, but is not limited to, positive exposure testing of residents as required by ODH.
 - b. Staff at each facility will be required to be tested.
- Beginning the week of May 24, two parallel paths for testing will start in nursing home facilities—those facilities that have confirmed cases and staff in all nursing home facilities.
 - a. In nursing home facilities that have confirmed or assumed cases of COVID-19, positive exposure testing will be conducted on staff and residents considering individual situations and circumstances as appropriate.
 - b. Staff in all nursing home facilities will be tested regardless of resident testing status to prevent the virus from infecting that community.

These paths are a snapshot in time that allows for more aggressive identification and isolation of COVID-19 cases and will help to slow the spread of the virus.

- Local medical professionals from the Ohio National Guard have been requested to support onsite sample collection at these facilities beginning the week of May 24.
 - a. These are members of your healthcare community who care for your neighbors, friends, and family, and who also happen to serve the State of Ohio.
- This testing is a critical tool to save and protect lives by stopping the spread of COVID-19.
 - a. The more people we can test, the more effective this effort will be.
 - b. We know that families have entrusted the care of loved ones to these facilities, and we are asking them to be partners in our mission to provide COVID-19 testing for individuals in these facilities.
 - c. Ohio's Congregate Care Unified Response Team is here to help all Ohioans.

For additional information, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.

For answers to your COVID-19 questions, call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634).

Your mental health is just as important as your physical health. If you or a loved one are experiencing anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, help is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Call the COVID-19 CareLine at 1-800-720-9616.

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019



Department of Health

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19 by taking these precautions.

PREVENTION

For additional information call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH or visit coronavirus.ohio.gov.



STAY HOME EXCEPT FOR WORK AND OTHER NEEDS



WEAR A FACE COVERING WHEN GOING OUT



PRACTICE SOCIAL DISTANCING OF AT LEAST 6 FEET FROM OTHERS



SHOP AT NON-PEAK HOURS



WASH HANDS OFTEN WITH WATER AND SOAP (20 SECONDS OR LONGER)



AVOID TOUCHING YOUR EYES, NOSE, OR MOUTH WITH UNWASHED HANDS OR AFTER TOUCHING SURFACES



COVER YOUR MOUTH WITH A TISSUE OR SLEEVE WHEN COUGHING OR SNEEZING



CLEAN AND DISINFECT "HIGH-TOUCH" SURFACES OFTEN



DON'T WORK WHEN SICK



CALL BEFORE VISITING YOUR DOCTOR

For more information, visit: coronavirus.ohio.gov