



COVID-19 Pre-hospital test instructions

Important: You must do your COVID-19 swab test exactly 3 days before the day of your procedure, which you can find on your hospital letter.

Test kit barcode:

Name:

Before you start

- Once you have taken your COVID-19 home test you must self-isolate until your hospital procedure
- Read these instructions carefully, use the checklist and timetable to help you follow the correct timing for each step
- To understand how we use your data, and to access additional support guidance, along with an easy read version and multiple language translations of this booklet, visit www.gov.uk/dhsc/test-before-hospital
- Keep this booklet as a record of your test

What you need to do and by when

It is very important that you take the time to understand this page and follow each step at the correct time shown below.

	Steps	Day to complete each step
1	Check test kit contents Page 4	As soon as you receive your test kit
2	Find your nearest Royal Mail priority postbox Page 6	As soon as you receive your test kit (at least 4 days before the day of your procedure)
3-5	Prepare, take and package swab sample Pages 7-12	3 days before the day of your procedure
6	Post your completed test kit Page 13	By midday at the latest, 3 days before the day of your procedure
7	Get test result by text Page 14	By 12pm 1 day before your procedure

Warnings Failure to follow the instructions in this booklet may affect the performance of the test and invalidate the test results. Do not use if package arrives damaged or missing components. Device is for single use only. Keep out of the reach of children. These kits are only designed for human use. Do not use excessive force, pressure or bending when collecting swab samples as this may result in accidental breakage of the swab shaft. Clean spills from the plastic tube using household bleach or disinfecting wipes. Get medical advice if the solution is accidentally swallowed or comes into contact with the skin, mouth or eyes.

Timetable

Circle the day of your procedure and use the table below to help workout the correct days to complete steps 2 to 6

Circle the day of your procedure (dark green) and then look down the table to find out which days to complete each of the steps (light green):



Day of your procedure	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
4 days before the day of your procedure - complete step 2 by this day	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
3 days before the day of your procedure - step 3,4,5,6	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur

The test is suitable for the following people:

- Adults aged 16 and over Self-test (unless unable to do so)
- Teenagers aged 12 to 15 Self-test with adult supervision
- Children 11 and under Adult to test (see page 7 for tips on how to test a child)

Precautions If you have problems with your hands or vision, you may need someone to assist you with the swabbing and testing process. If you have a nose piercing swab the other nostril. If pierced on both sides, remove the piercing on one side before swabbing. If there is a reason you cannot take a throat swab, swab both nostrils instead. Avoid eating or drinking for at least 30 minutes before doing the test to reduce the risk of spoiling the test.

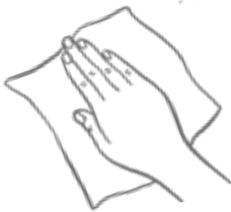
1. Check test kit contents

as soon as you receive the kit



1

Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.



2

Clean and dry a surface and place the home test kit contents on it.

3

Call the **hospital** where you are having the procedure immediately if anything is broken or missing.



Swab, inside sealed wrapper



Leak-proof bag



Plastic tube, containing a small amount of liquid



Security seal, for the return box



White absorbent pad



Return box with pre-paid Royal Mail return label

2. Find your nearest Royal Mail priority postbox

As soon as you receive the kit, at least 4 days before the day of your procedure

Important: The day before you take your sample, check collection times at your nearest Royal Mail priority postbox. You need to post your completed test kit by midday.

As weekend and bank holiday collection times may differ from weekdays, it is important to look at collection times for the day you will be sending back your test (3 days before the day of procedure). If you can't locate a priority postbox with a collection on that day, book a courier using the number below.



Visit www.royalmail.com/services-near-you

Click the 'Show my nearest priority postboxes' tickbox.

Enter the postcode of where you are staying and select the address.

View priority postboxes near you.

If you will return your kit on a weekend, you can see weekend collection times by clicking on 'more information'.

If you cannot get to a priority postbox?

Call the contact centre (at **0800 0511 811**) for guidance on when to take your test and how to book a courier collection if you are:

- unable to get to a priority postbox without using public transport.
- unable to follow the government's social distancing guidelines.
- to return your kit on a weekend or bank holiday and the priority postboxes near you do not offer weekend collections.

More information on booking a courier is on page 16.

Precautions If you have problems with your hands or vision, you may need someone to assist you with the swabbing and testing process. If you have a nose piercing swab the other nostril. If pierced on both sides, remove the piercing on one side before swabbing. If you have had a nosebleed within the last 24 hours, swab the other nostril or wait 24 hours. If there is a reason you cannot take a throat swab, swab both nostrils instead. Avoid eating or drinking for at least 30 minutes before doing the test to reduce the risk of spoiling the test.

3. Prepare to do the test on yourself or someone else

3 days before the day of your procedure

Important: Take your test by 7am at the latest on the day you will post your kit, 3 days before your procedure, to give yourself enough time before last collection.

Prepare to take the sample

Avoid eating or drinking for at least 30 minutes before doing the test to reduce the risk of spoiling the test.

Taking the test may feel a little uncomfortable and unusual.

If you are doing the test on a child or someone else, talk through the steps together. Remain calm and confident as you go through the process.

Watch how to take a swab test at youtu.be/zCqo7MhQT6U

Watch how to test a child at youtu.be/Xaw8DsF2lgc

(For UK home test kits. Exact models may vary).



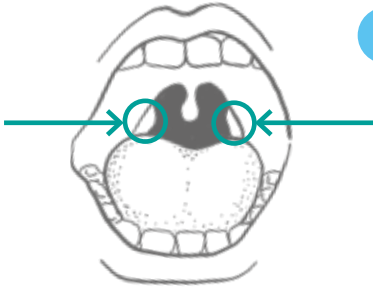
Tips for testing a child

- Contact the hospital where the procedure will take place if you cannot do the test
- Try to explain the test to the child in words they can understand
- Some children may feel more comfortable sitting on a care giver's lap
- Read the advice, Coronavirus in children, on page 18 of this leaflet



4. Take a swab sample

3 days before the day of your procedure



- 1 Look inside the mouth and find the tonsils (or the area where they would be if you do not have them) at the back of the throat. This is where you'll take the swab sample.

You can use a torch and a mirror to help you.

If testing someone else, ask them to say 'ahhhh' loudly for 5 seconds, so that you can see their tonsils.

Tip for a child: If you cannot swab their tonsils, swab both of their nostrils 4 times on each side instead.

Note: The result may be less accurate.



- 2 Gently blow the nose and cough into a tissue so excess mucus does not spoil the test.

Throw the tissue away in a closed bin.



- 3 Wash your hands thoroughly for 20 seconds using soap and warm water before handling the test kit to avoid contaminating it.

4

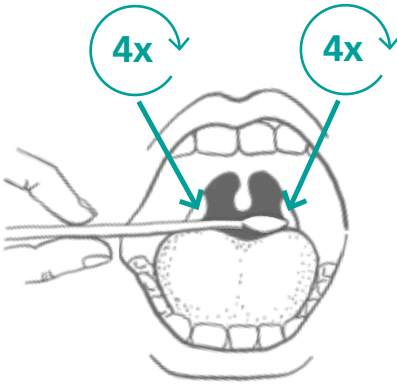
Open the package at the stick end and gently take out the swab. You will need to use this for both tonsils and nose.



Important: Try not to touch your tongue, teeth, cheeks, gums, or any other surfaces with the swab's fabric tip, as this may spoil your sample. If this does happen, complete and return the test anyway.

5

Holding the swab between your fingers, open the mouth wide and gently rub the swab's fabric tip over both tonsils. Do this with firm contact 4 times on each side



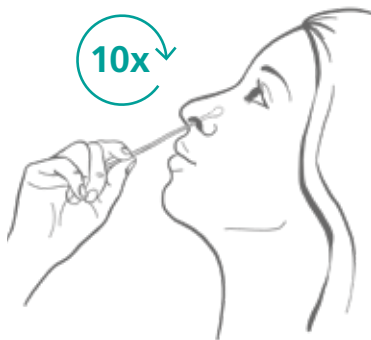
Use a torch or mirror to help you.

If testing someone else, get them to say 'ahhh' loudly while you take the sample.

When the swab touches the tonsils, it may cause some gagging or brief discomfort, but it should not hurt.

6

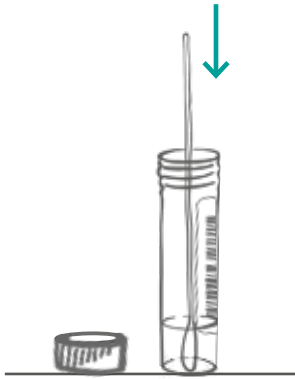
Put the same end of the same swab gently into the nostril about 2.5cm (1 inch) or until you feel some resistance.



Roll the swab firmly around the inside of the nostril, making 10 complete circles and slowly remove it.

If you have a nose-piercing, use the other nostril.

Important: This may feel uncomfortable. Do not insert the swab any deeper if there's a feeling of strong resistance or pain.



- 7** Screw the lid off the plastic tube, while keeping it upright so the liquid stays inside. Take care not to let the fabric tip touch anything.

Put the swab into it with the fabric tip facing down.



- 8** Snap off the stick end of the swab, so that it fits inside the tube without bending.

Securely screw the lid on so no liquid can leak.



Important: The liquid must stay in the tube.



Lid not secure



Bent stick



Too short



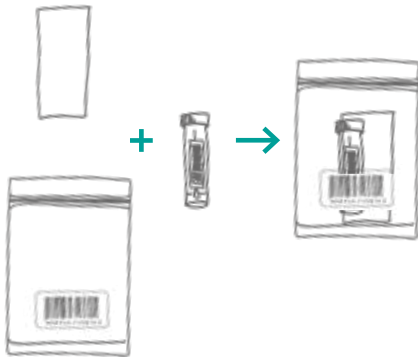
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5. Package the test kit

3 days before the day of your procedure



- 1 Wash your hands thoroughly for **20 seconds**, using soap and warm water.



- 2 Make sure the barcodes on the plastic tube and the leak-proof bag match.

Place the absorbent pad into the leak-proof bag.

Put the tube next to the absorbent pad in the same bag.

Let some air out of the leak-proof bag and then seal it using its adhesive seal.



- 3** Follow the assembly instructions on the return box. If you can, wipe down the bag and box with an antiseptic wipe.

Put the leak-proof bag into the box and close the box.

Apply the security seal as directed.



- 4** Take a picture or note of the barcode on your Royal Mail return label for reference.

If you need help, call **0800 0511 811**.

6. Post your completed test kit

3 days before the day of your procedure

Post the completed test kit 3 days before the day of your procedure by 12pm and no later than 1 hour before the last collection time (weekend and bank holiday times may differ from weekdays).

Only use a Royal Mail priority postbox with the label and one of the NHS logos below:



Follow the Government's social distancing guidelines, wear a mask and do **not** take public transport. You must **not** enter any Post Office with your test kit.

Some priority postboxes have a Sunday collection. They'll show one of these labels:

PRIORITY POSTBOX
**SATURDAY
& SUNDAY**

BLWCH POST BIAENORIAETHOL
**DYDD SADWRN
A DYDD SUL**
PRIORITY POSTBOX
**SATURDAY
& SUNDAY**

Track your delivery using your Royal Mail return label barcode at www.royalmail.com/track-and-trace

7. Get test result by text

1 day before the day of your procedure



You will receive your result by text before 12pm the day before your procedure.

Your hospital will also get the result by email.

If you do not receive your result by then, call your hospital.

What to do after getting your result?

- If the result is negative, please continue to self-isolate and visit the hospital on the day of your procedure
- If your result is positive or unclear, call your hospital to discuss what to do next

Have you been harmed or had a reaction while using this kit?

If you are in England, Wales or Northern Ireland report here:

coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk

Only use this website to report injuries and reactions.

If you are in Scotland report here:

nss.nhs.scot/health-facilities/incidents-and-alerts/report-an-incident/

Only use this website to report injuries and reactions.

If you are unable to post your kit in a priority postbox

You can book your free, next-day courier collection 4 days before the day of your procedure

Important: The courier will arrive the following day, which is the day you take your test. To confirm which day this is, see the timetable on page 3 or call 0800 0511 811 for more support.



To book your courier, call 0800 0511 811 between 8am and 6pm.



Your courier will arrive between 8am and 4pm on the day of collection.

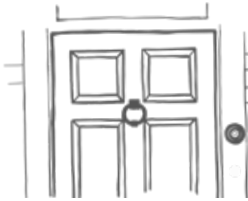
If you are returning your test using a courier, take your test by 7am on the day of collection to give yourself enough time before the courier arrives.

Giving a completed test kit box to the courier

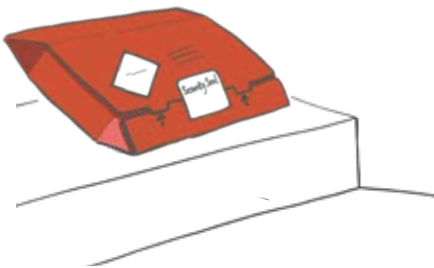
3 days before the day of your procedure, this is only required if you are unable to post your kit through a priority postbox

Important: Your courier will arrive between 8am and 4pm on the day of collection, 3 days before the day of your procedure.

Make sure you are ready with your completed test during this time. Do not place the return box outside until the courier arrives. Do not take the return box to the Post Office.



The courier will knock on your door or ring your doorbell and then move at least 2 metres away.



After they move away, open your door, place the return box outside and then close the door.

The courier will deliver your test kit box to a laboratory.

Collection issues?

If your test kit is not collected by 4pm or you missed your courier, call **0800 0511 811**.

Help and contact details

Coronavirus in children

Get more advice about coronavirus in children at:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/
symptoms/coronavirus-in-children](https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/symptoms/coronavirus-in-children)

Get help if you are worried

Visit NHS 111 online www.111.nhs.uk or call **111** :

- if you, or someone you live with, gets worse over the next few days or your symptoms do not get better after 7 days
- if you are worried about a baby or child who is ill

Call 999 in a medical emergency:

- if you think there's something seriously wrong
- if the baby or child seems very unwell or is getting worse

Do not delay getting help if you're worried. Trust your instincts

Visit www.111.nhs.uk/service/COVID-19 to check if you have coronavirus symptoms and find out what to do next

Help and contact details

Contact phone number

If you have any questions about your COVID-19 test kit, or if you want to book a courier, **call 0800 0511 811**

Lines are open 7am to 11pm every day (free for mobiles and landlines).



Manufactured for: Department of Health and Social Care, 39 Victoria Street, Westminster, London, SW1 0EU.

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