

COVID-19 TESTING PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS

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Next Steps.....

Specimens that are collected at Sparta Community Hospital are sent to an outside lab for testing. The time frame for receiving test results may vary. **Typically, we have results back within 72 hours, however they can take up to 96 hours.** Once received, your results will be viewable on your Sparta Community Hospital Patient Portal under scanned documents. The results will show as either detected or not-detected. You will also receive a phone call from the ordering provider. If your test returns as detected, this means that you have tested positive for COVID-19.

If you are positive, you may be contacted by the health department before you hear from the provider. PLEASE make a point to answer the phone, even if you do not recognize the number.

While you wait for your test results, in accordance with the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) you should:

- ⇒ Continue to practice **social distancing**, practice good hand hygiene, avoid close contact with people who are sick, avoid touching your face, disinfect surfaces, cover coughs and sneezes, and wear a mask.
- ⇒ Inform your supervisor at work that you have been tested for COVID-19, and note the date of the testing.
- ⇒ Self-monitor for symptoms.
- ⇒ If you are experiencing symptoms, let your supervisor know, and stay home.
- ⇒ If you are not experiencing symptoms, work with your employer to determine work restrictions, if any.
- ⇒ Start making a list of people who you have been around in the two days prior to symptom onset, or if asymptomatic, prior to the specimen being collected. This information will help with contact tracing if your test returns as positive.
- ⇒ Please understand that even if you don't experience symptoms, you **might** make others sick.

Sparta Community Hospital CANNOT issue return to work slips for patients. If test returns as detected, the health department of your residence will notify you when your quarantine or isolation period ends. Your health department of residence may also provide you with a letter of release.

Self-Monitor for Symptoms

- Respiratory distress such as shortness of breath
- Fever/chills
- Cough
- Sore Throat
- Muscle aches
- New loss of taste or smell
- Note the day any new symptoms begin, and keep a record of when they are experienced.

If at any time you develop concerning symptoms, it is very important that you contact your PCP or Sparta Community Hospital Quality Healthcare Clinics at 443-1362.

When seeking medical attention, please call ahead, so that your provider or emergency department may take necessary precautions to keep other patients safe from exposure. If you call 911, please notify the dispatcher that you are seeking care for someone who has, or may have COVID-19.

If your COVID-19 test results come back as detected (positive)...

In accordance with Centers of Disease Control (CDC), Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), and the Regulatory Authority of the Randolph County Health Department, **you are required to home isolate**. You are to practice **social distancing**; staying home except to get medical care and limiting close contact with others living in your home.

Social Distancing

Conscious effort to maintain distance between yourself and others to mitigate the spread of disease. Stay 6 feet away from people as often as possible.

Self-Monitor

Monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 by taking temperature and remaining alert for cough or difficulty breathing.

Quarantine

Separates people who were exposed, but do not have symptoms. A person can be contagious before symptoms begin, so this is critical to prevent the spread.

Isolation

Separates people with symptoms of COVID-19, with or without a COVID-19 detected test. Stay home and away from others who share your residence to prevent the spread.

You must:

Isolate for a minimum of 10 days after symptoms started. In addition to remaining **isolated** for 10 days, you must also be symptom and fever free for 24-hours without fever reducing medications, before your **isolation** can be lifted. If no symptoms occur, your **isolation** period may end 10 days from the date of the COVID-19 detected test. **For example:**

- A case that is well on day 3 and no fever and feeling well for 24 hours must remain **isolated** through day 10.
- A case that is still symptomatic on day 10, and symptoms last until day 12, you cannot be released from **isolation** until day 15.

Your close contacts:

They must be **quarantined** for 10 days after the last/most recent contact with the case when the case was infectious.

If a close contact develops symptoms, they should follow **isolation** rules for the case above.

Your household contacts:

Household contacts with separate living quarters between case and contacts: **quarantine** for 10 days after last exposure to case.

Household contacts that share a room/living quarters (i.e. have ongoing contact with or exposed to the case): **quarantine** during contact and for 10 days after case is released from **isolation**. **Household contacts include:** intimate contacts, or contacts within 6 feet for 10 minutes or longer.

The household and close contact **quarantine** is required because someone can show symptoms, or be exposed on a Monday, not develop an infection yet on a Tuesday, and have a test that returns as non-detected for COVID-19; but then develop a clinical infection on Wednesday, and have a COVID-19 detected test on Thursday.

Answer the phone if the local health department calls. The health department is working to slow and prevent the spread of the virus in the community. All information provided to the local health department is confidential and may only be shared with those who need to know, such as the patient's physician. Remind the patient that their name will not be shared with those they came into contact with; close contacts will only be told they might have been exposed to COVID-19.

If your COVID-19 test results come back as not-detected...

You are probably not infected at this time. However, you must continue to practice all protective measures to keep yourself, and others safe. Precautions include:

- Continuing to practice **social distancing**, practice good hand hygiene, avoid social gatherings according to local guidelines, avoid close contact with people who are sick, avoid touching your face, disinfect surfaces, cover coughs and sneezes, and wear a mask.
- Continuing to monitor your temperature and notify your provider if any concerning symptoms occur. Symptoms can take up to 14 days to appear.

If you were tested due to brief encounter with a positive COVID-19 individual:

As long as you have not, and continue to not have any symptoms, you should follow the same protective measures listed above. Discuss with your employer if there are any other precautions you will need to take in the work environment.

The COVID-19 test measures for infection.

A test returned as not-detected does not rule out the onset of symptoms during the 14 day period. The results may just mean that your body has not developed an infection to COVID-19.

An individual can show symptoms, or be exposed on a Monday, not develop an infection yet on a Tuesday, and COVID-19 not be detected; but may later develop a clinical infection on Wednesday, and a test returns detected on Thursday.

If you were tested due to prolonged, close encounter (ie: household) with a positive COVID-19 individual:

Regardless of experiencing symptoms, you will need to stay home and **quarantine** for 10 days from the last known exposure. You will need to check your temperature twice a day and monitor for any symptoms. Report any developing symptoms, including temperature over 100.4°F to your provider. Stay away from people who are high risk for getting sick from the COVID-19 virus.

If you were tested due to experiencing concerning symptoms:

You are required to **social distance**, and stay home for a minimum of 10 days from start of symptoms. You must also be symptom and fever free for 24 hours without any fever reducing medications before you should return to normal activity.



How COVID-19 Spreads:

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person to person, through close contacts with another (within 6 feet) by respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks.
- Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not showing any symptoms, which is why social distancing is extremely important.
- The virus may also be spread by touching contaminated surfaces and then touching your face with unwashed hands.

How to Protect Yourself & Others



Clean your hands often

Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after you have been in public places or after blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing.

If soap and water is not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid close contact

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.

Put distance between yourself and other people—at least 6 feet apart

Stay at home as much as possible.



Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others to protect them in case you are infected

Cloth face coverings should not be placed on young children under age 2, anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated or otherwise unable to remove the mask without assistance.



Cover coughs and sneezes

Always cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze or use the inside of your elbow.

Throw used tissues in the trash and immediately wash your hands.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily

This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, counter tops, handles, desk, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets and sinks.

If surfaces are dirty, clean them using a detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.



Prepare for possible illness

Take additional precautions for those at higher risk, particularly older adults and those who have underlying, chronic health conditions.

Make sure you have access to several weeks of medications and supplies in case you need to stay home.

There is currently no vaccine or medication to treat or prevent COVID-19.

Most people experience minor symptoms such as fever and cough. Over the counter medications that lesson symptoms of fever and cough may help. It is important to get rest and drink plenty of fluids.