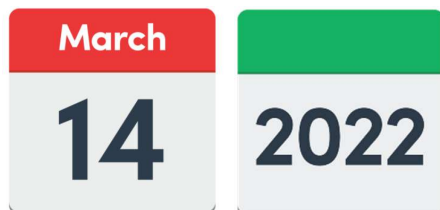




Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government

**Unite
against
COVID-19**

Getting tested for COVID-19 using a PCR test

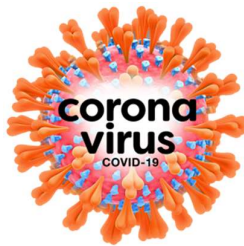


**Updated:
14 March 2021**

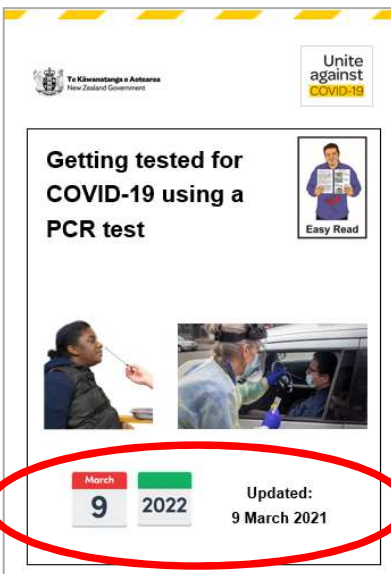
Before you read this



This document tells you the things you need to know about PCR testing.



We know things are changing all the time as we learn more about COVID-19.



We will update this document as soon as we know more.

We will change the date on the front cover so you know it has been updated.

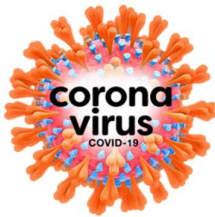
Please check the COVID-19 **website** for updates:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/easy-read/>



What you will find in here:

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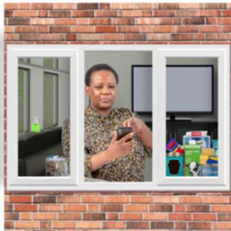
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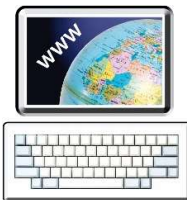
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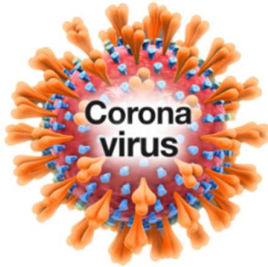


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What is COVID-19?

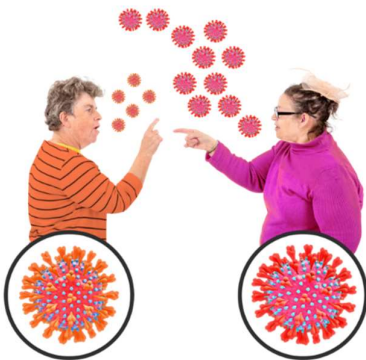


COVID-19 is a virus that can make people sick.



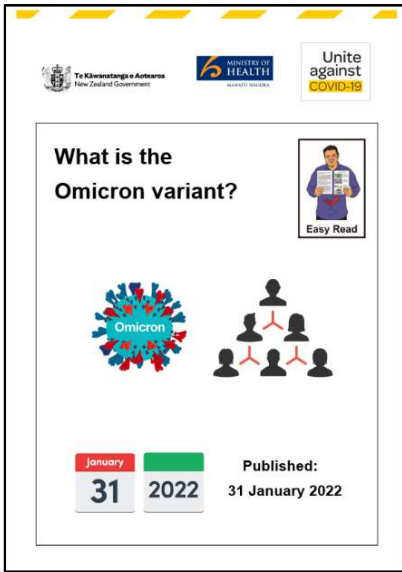
COVID-19 is sometimes called:

- coronavirus
- **Omicron.**



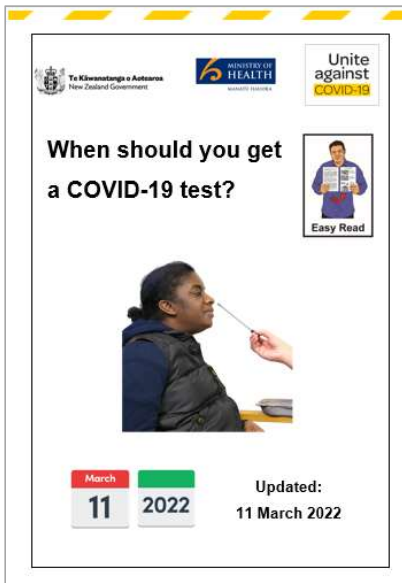
Omicron:

- can also make people sick
- spreads **very** easily between people.



There are Easy Read documents called:

What is the Omicron variant?



When should you get tested for COVID-19?

You can find these documents on the COVID-19 website:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/easy-read/>

What is a COVID-19 test?



COVID-19 tests are the best way of finding out if people have COVID-19.

There are 2 kinds of COVID-19 tests used in New Zealand:



- **PCR test**
- **Rapid Antigen Test / RAT.**



Most people will use a RAT to find out if they have COVID-19.

Some people may need to have a PCR test for COVID-19.



If you are not sure what COVID-19 test to have you can call:

- your doctor
- Healthline on **0800 358 5453**.



They can give you advice about being tested for COVID-19.



The Healthline phone line is open:

- everyday
- all day and all night.



It does not cost any money to call the Healthline phone number.



If you find it hard to use the phone
the **New Zealand Relay** service is for
people who:

- are deaf / hard of hearing
- are deafblind
- find it hard to talk.



You can find more about the New
Zealand Relay service at this **website**:

<https://www.nzrelay.co.nz/index>



There is an Easy Read document called:

How to use a rapid antigen test or RAT.

You can find this document on the COVID-19 **website** at:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/easy-read/>



This Easy Read document has information about having a **PCR test**.

How the PCR test works



A **health worker** will do your PCR test.



The health worker will use a **swab** to take a **sample** from the very back part of your nose.



A **swab** is like a cotton bud on a long stick.



A **sample** is a bit of **mucus** from the back of your nose.

Mucus is what comes out of your nose when you have a cold or blow your nose.



What happens during a PCR test:

- 1) The health worker may check your:
 - temperature using a thermometer that is waved close to the top of your head
 - throat
 - chest.
- 2) The health worker will put the swab up 1 side of your nose.
- 3) The swab will touch the very back part of your nose.
- 4) The health worker will turn the swab to get a sample of mucus.



What happens next during the PCR test:

- 5) The health worker will take the swab out of your nose.
- 6) The health worker will send your swab away to be tested.



Doing a PCR test takes about **10 seconds**.

Some people find that when the swab is in their nose they:

- feel a tickle up their nose
- find their nose stings for a short time.





The sample is sent to a **laboratory**.



A **laboratory** is a place where people look at the samples.

The people in the laboratory test the sample to see if it has any of the COVID-19 virus.



Most of the time you will find out your **test results** in about **2 to 5 days**.

Your **test results** will tell you if you have COVID-19 or not.

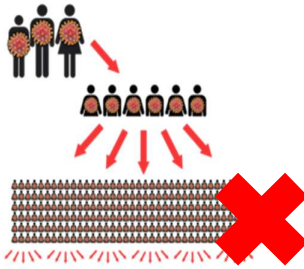


The health worker doing your PCR test will be wearing **Personal Protective Equipment**.



Personal Protective Equipment is also called **PPE**.

PPE is used to help stop you and other people from:



- getting COVID-19
- spreading COVID-19.



PPE can be:



- face masks
- gloves
- gowns or plastic aprons.



PPE can also be:

- eye wear like glasses
- face shields.



PPE may look scary but it is a good thing.

It can help to stop the spread of COVID-19.



The health worker giving you the PCR test will change:

- their gloves after every test
- all of their PPE every 2 or 4 hours.



Where to get a PCR test



PCR tests are being done:

- at medical centres
- in cars at drive-in testing centres
- at **pop up testing stations.**



A **pop up testing station** is a testing place that has been set up in a:

- tent
- a portacabin which is like a small building.



Most of the time you **do not** have to phone before you go to a:

- drive-in testing centre
- a pop up testing station.



You can find a list of all the PCR testing places on the **Healthpoint website**:

www.healthpoint.co.nz/covid-19/



You can also call **Healthline** to ask where you can go for a PCR test.



The phone number for Healthline is:

0800 358 5453



Sometimes there are lots of people calling Healthline.

You may need to wait on the phone to speak to someone at Healthline.



You may be worried that having a PCR test will not feel very nice.



You can take someone to support you during your PCR test.

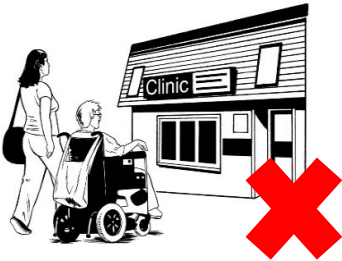


The PCR test is safe.



It does not cost you any money to have a PCR test.

Getting tested at a medical centre



Please **do not** go straight to your doctor to ask for a PCR test.



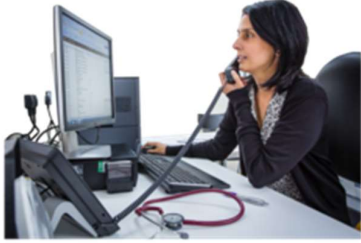
It is important that you phone them first.



If you cannot use the phone:

- ask someone you know to call for you
- use the National Relay Service.





Your doctor will tell you over the phone:

- where to go to have your PCR test
- what you need to do to keep everyone safe when you go for your PCR test.



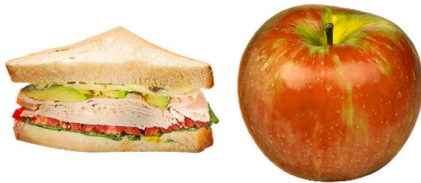
Getting tested in your car at a drive-in testing centre



At the drive-in testing centres there may be lots of people in their cars waiting to be tested.



If you need to wait a long time it may be a good idea to take:



- water to drink

- food to eat



- your medication

- something to do while you wait in your car such as:

- a book to read

- iPad or mobile phone.





As you wait you will drive slowly towards the drive-in testing centre.

There may be people working to show you where to drive to.



At the testing centre the health worker will come to your car window.



It is important that you **stay in your car**.



The health worker will tell you when to:

- put your car window all the way down
- lower your face covering if you are wearing one.





The health worker will also ask you for your:

- full name
- phone number
- address of where you live
- your **NHI number** if you know it.



Every person who uses health services in New Zealand is given a **National Health Index** number.

Everyone has a different National Health Index number.

The National Health Index number is sometimes called **NHI** number.





The health worker will then use a long cotton bud to take a sample from the very back of your nose.

When the test is done you can:

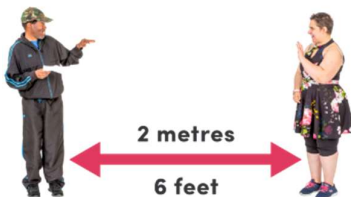


- put your car window back up
- drive home.

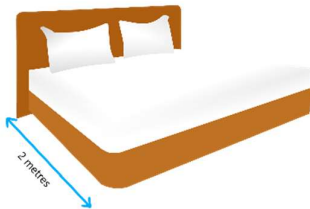
Getting tested at a pop up testing station



At a pop up testing station there may be lots of people lined up waiting to be tested.



While you are waiting you will need to stay **2 metres** away from other people in the line.



2 metres is about as long as a bed.



Wear a **face covering** when you go for your PCR test.



If you cannot wear a face covering you can show your **face covering exemption card** if you have one.



If you need to wait a long time it may be a good idea to take:

- a rain coat or umbrella if it starts to rain while you are waiting
- water to drink
- your medication
- something to do while you wait in line such as:
 - a book to read
 - an iPad or mobile phone
 - headphones to listen to music.



When it is your turn to be tested a health worker will ask you for your:

- full name
- phone number
- address of where you live
- your NHI number if you know it.



The health worker will then:

- ask you to lower your face covering if you are wearing one
- use a long cotton bud to take a sample from the very back of your nose.



What you can do if waiting for your PCR test is hard to do



Some people may find it hard to wait a long time in their car or in a line.



Some reasons for this are:

- they cannot stand or sit in a car for a very long time
- it is too noisy
- it is hard for them to understand why they have to wait
- they have a service dog
- they cannot wear a face covering.





It is still important to have a PCR test if you need one.



If you have a disability or health condition that makes it hard to wait then you or your carer can:

- call your doctor to ask about the best place for you to get your PCR test
- call Healthline to find out the best accessible testing centres in the area you live.



You may be able to get a PCR test at your home if you:

- cannot safely leave your home to get your test
- are too sick to travel.





To see if this can happen talk to:

- your doctor
- Healthline.



The **phone** number for Healthline is:

0800 358 5453.



It will not cost you any money to call Healthline.



Healthline is open all the time – day and night.

What to do after your PCR test



After your PCR test you **must** stay at home to wait for your test results.



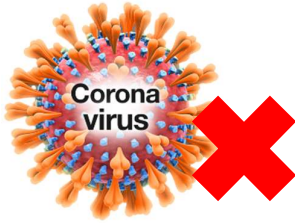
Most of the time you will find out your COVID PCR test results in **2 to 5 days**.

Your **test results** will tell you if you have COVID-19 or not.



If you still do not have a result after 5 days you should phone your doctor.

Negative test results

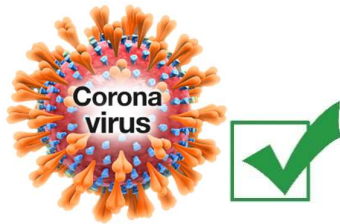


A **negative test** result means you **do not** have COVID-19.



If the test shows you do **not** have COVID-19 you will get a text message.

Positive test results



A **positive test** result means you **do** have COVID-19.



If the test says you **do** have COVID-19 you will get a text message to tell you your result.

The text message will also have a link to a form to fill in.

The image shows the cover of an "Easy Read" document. At the top left is the New Zealand Government logo with the text "Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa New Zealand Government". In the center is the "MINISTRY OF HEALTH" logo. At the top right is a logo that says "Unite against COVID-19". The main title is "What happens if your COVID-19 test result is positive". Below the title is a small icon of a person holding a document labeled "Easy Read". The central illustration shows a person sitting in a chair while another person takes a swab sample from their nose. To the left of the illustration is a "SARS-CoV-2 Rapid Kit". At the bottom left is a calendar icon showing "March 11 2022". At the bottom right, it says "Updated: 11 March 2022".

There is an Easy Read document called:

What happens if your COVID-19 test result is positive

You can find this document on the COVID-19 **website**:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/easy-read/>

Where to find more information



The COVID-19 government **website** is:

<https://covid19.govt.nz>

You can use this website to find out more information about:



- looking after yourself if you have COVID-19
- where to get support if you need it.



More information about COVID-19 is available in Easy Read on the COVID-19 **website**:

<https://covid19.govt.nz/easy-read/>



This information has been written by the team at Unite against COVID-19.



It has been translated into Easy Read by the Make It Easy service of People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



The ideas in this document are not the ideas of People First New Zealand Inc. Ngā Tāngata Tuatahi.



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- Sam Corliss
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