**What is the COVID-19 Test?**

NEMS conducts the following type of COVID-19 test:

- **Swab testing:** this test is conducted by swabbing the inside of your nose or mouth and is used to detect the virus in your body right now.

**How long will it take to get my results? How will I be informed?**

The turnaround time for COVID-19 test results is about 3 to 14 days but may be longer due to lab capacity. The NEMS provider who ordered your COVID-19 test will call you with the results as soon as they are available.

**Will my insurance cover the test?**

Most insurances will cover the COVID-19 test. If you have a commercial plan, your deductible, out-of-pocket, and any copayments may apply. If you have Medicare or Medi-Cal, your insurance will cover the full cost of the test.

If you don’t have insurance or if your insurance plan doesn’t cover COVID-19 testing and related services, you may qualify for Medi-Cal’s COVID-19 Presumptive Eligibility Program. This program covers COVID-19 diagnostic testing, testing-related services and treatment services at no cost. If you choose not to enroll in this Medi-Cal program, NEMS offers a sliding fee discount program and you may qualify for free testing. In order to enroll in either programs, please call NEMS Member Services at 415-391-9686 ext. 8160 or 650-550-3923 ext. 8160 or 408-573-9686 ext. 8160.

**What should I do while I wait for the results of my test?**

**Home Isolation Guidance**

If you had a COVID-19 test and are experiencing symptoms such as fever of at least 100.4°F, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, sore throat, muscle aches, headache, feeling unusually weak or tired, diarrhea, congested or runny nose, or losing the sense of smell or taste, follow the **Home Isolation Guidance** below while you await your results.

- **Stay home for at least 10 days**
  - You can end your isolation after at least 10 days since your symptoms began, and your fever is gone for the past 24 hours without taking fever-reducing medicine and other symptoms have improved.
  - If you have severe immune system weakness, you may need to stay in isolation longer. Please discuss with your doctor.
  - You do not need, and should not get, a second COVID-19 test in order to end your isolation. Just follow the instructions in the bullets above.

**Home Quarantine Guidance**

If you had a COVID-19 test and have no symptoms but live in a household with or had close contact* (see examples on next page) with someone who has COVID-19, follow the **Home Quarantine Guidance** below while you await your results.

- **Stay in home quarantine for 14 days to see if you develop symptoms.**
  - If you’re unable to avoid close contact with someone with COVID-19, you must quarantine for 14 days after the day that person completed their self-isolation (likely to be up to 24 days total).
  - If you develop symptoms, it is possible you may have COVID-19 and you must follow the **Home Isolation Guidance** on the left.
  - Monitor symptoms and check with your medical provider to seek COVID-19 testing.

*The Home Isolation Guidance and Home Quarantine Guidance outlined in this document meet the requirements set forth by the City & County of San Francisco. If you reside in a different county, please refer to your county’s public health department for specific isolation and quarantine guidance.*
If you develop additional symptoms or if your symptoms worsen, notify your primary care provider. In the case of an emergency, call 911 and also let them know you are waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test. Symptoms that indicate you should seek medical care include**:

- Difficulty breathing
- Can’t keep fluids down
- Dehydration
- Confusion
- Other serious symptoms

** This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider, or 911 in the case of an emergency, for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning. NEMS clinics can be reached at (415) 391-9686 or (650) 550-3923 or (408) 573-9686.

What should I do if my symptoms worsen?

If you develop additional symptoms or if your symptoms worsen, notify your primary care provider. In the case of an emergency, call 911 and also let them know you are waiting for the results of a COVID-19 test. Symptoms that indicate you should seek medical care include**:

- Difficulty breathing
- Can’t keep fluids down
- Dehydration
- Confusion
- Other serious symptoms

** This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider, or 911 in the case of an emergency, for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning. NEMS clinics can be reached at (415) 391-9686 or (650) 550-3923 or (408) 573-9686.

What if my COVID-19 test is positive?

If your test result is positive for COVID-19, it means you had COVID-19 infection on the day you were tested. A healthcare provider will evaluate whether you can be cared for at home or whether you should be treated in the hospital. If your provider determines you can be treated at home, follow the Home Isolation Guidance previously described.

While most infected persons make a full recovery from COVID-19, you must follow the Home Isolation Guidance along with the following guidelines:

- There is no specific medicine to treat COVID-19 so it is important to get plenty of rest, drink plenty of fluids and use acetaminophen to reduce fever. (Check with a doctor before giving any medications to children under 2 years of age.)
- Monitor your symptoms, especially if you are over age 60, have chronic conditions such as lung disease, heart disease or diabetes, have a weakened immune system and/or are pregnant.
- If your symptoms get worse such as difficulty breathing, call your doctor immediately. If it is an emergency, call 911. In both instances tell them you have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- If your test is positive, any people who had close contact with you within 48 hours before your symptoms began will need to follow the Home Quarantine Guidance.

What if my COVID-19 test is negative?

If your test result is negative, it means you PROBABLY do not have COVID-19 infection right now. If your COVID-19 test is negative and you have NO symptoms and have not had close contact with a COVID-19 positive person, you can resume your daily life with proper social distancing.

If your test result is negative, but you had COVID-19 symptoms, the negative test result could be wrong -- you still might have COVID-19. This is because the test is excellent but not perfect.

- At a minimum, follow Home Isolation Guidance until you feel better, with at least 1 day with no fever; or
- Ask your doctor when you should stop following Home Isolation Guidance; or
- If you are in close contact with a “vulnerable” person, you might want to keep following Home Isolation Guidance until at least 10 days have passed since your symptoms first started.

If your test result is negative for COVID-19, but you were a close contact of a COVID-19 positive person, follow the Home Quarantine Guidance above.

Should my household member(s) get tested for COVID-19?

Your close contacts should follow the Home Quarantine Guidance if your COVID-19 test is positive, including monitoring their symptoms and reaching out to a provider for a COVID-19 test. Call NEMS at (415) 391-9686 or (650) 550-3923 or (408) 573-9686 to find the nearest COVID-19 testing location.