

Frequently Asked Questions

Do patients/residents have the right to refuse asymptomatic testing?

- Yes. Patients/residents should be offered the test however their consent is required. For those who refuse testing, this will not alter or inform the current management. Be very sensitive to the patient's wishes and do not coerce or imply delay if they refuse to be tested.

If a patient/resident refuses asymptomatic surveillance testing should they be isolated?

- No, isolation is not required for those individuals who meet the criteria for asymptomatic surveillance testing for COVID-19 but who refuse to be tested (unless isolation is required for other reasons).
- If, however, the patient/resident has symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 and testing is recommended but the test is refused, isolation will be required.

What if the patient/resident cannot consent to testing/treatment (unconscious, incompetent or psychosis)?

- If the swab is indicated to rule out contributing factors to the presentation, it would not be considered asymptomatic surveillance testing. If the patient is not competent, it would require consent as per normal processes.

In situations where an asymptomatic resident is being newly or re-admitted to a long term care facility, asymptomatic testing is recommended. For those residents who have been tested at the sending health care facility, is another test required upon arrival at the long term care facility?

- No, unless symptoms develop do not repeat a test if one has occurred within the past week.

If a patient/resident/client had an asymptomatic surveillance test for COVID-19 yesterday and the results were negative but they have now developed a fever or other COVID-19 symptoms, do they need to be tested again?

- Yes, test again and indicate symptoms on the lab requisition.

Is there a maximum number of times that a patient/resident/client can be tested for COVID-19?

- No. Certain high-risk occupations may be offered asymptomatic testing with a recommendation that they return for testing as often as once per week. While a maximum number of tests is not indicated, it is not recommended that any individual be tested more frequently than once per week.

Are newborns to be included in asymptomatic surveillance testing for COVID-19?

- No. COVID-19 testing of asymptomatic newborns is not recommended.