

Testing for Covid-19

There are two different types of tests that can be taken for Covid-19. One shows if you have an ongoing infection and the other shows if you have had Covid-19 and developed antibodies.

The test that shows whether you have an ongoing infection is called a PCR test. The test that shows whether you have had the infection and developed antibodies is called a serological test.

It is important to be aware that neither of these tests are absolutely reliable. There is always a certain percentage who will receive an incorrect result.

When can I test myself for Covid-19?

You can take a PCR test when you have symptoms that do not pass within 24 hours.

You can take a serological test at the earliest 14 days after you started having symptoms. By then, antibodies have had time to reach measurable levels. You can take the test several months after you have recovered.

You do not need to take an antibody test if you took a PCR test when you were ill and tested positive for Covid-19.

Who can take a Covid-19 test?

It is good to take a PCR test to find out if you have an ongoing Covid-19 infection, even if the symptoms are mild.

Children from preschool age and up are also recommended to get tested.

You may be recommended to get tested as part of infection tracing. You will then be contacted by the person who potentially infected you or by the health service. Read more about your obligations in the article about [the Communicable Diseases Act](#).

Your employer may want you to get tested if you are ill, for example if you are working in a critical sector. A negative test result may allow you to return to work sooner once you feel better.

Antibody test

Some regions provide antibody tests for everyone over 18, while other regions prioritise who can get tested.

Read more in this text about what applies where you live. First select your region. You do this at the top of the page.

How can I get tested in Västernorrland?

Order a test kit through 1177 Vårdguiden

If you live in Västernorrland and you have any symptoms at all of Covid-19, you can order a test kit to take the test at home, as long as you are over the age of 6 and have an appointed representative.

You order the test by logging in to 1177 Vårdguiden's e-services.

The test will show if you have Covid-19.

Read about [Test kit for Covid-19 Västernorrland](#) here.

Testing at a health centre – call first!

A person who is having symptoms and wishes to take a Covid-19 test, but who does not have the option of ordering a test kit, needs to call their health centre for a medical assessment and a possible appointment.

If many people want to make an appointment for testing, employees within the county rescue services will have first priority.

Priority groups for testing:

- Persons with symptoms of Covid-19 who need hospital care
- Elderly persons in residential care with symptoms of Covid-19 and people with disabilities in residential care
- If you are in a risk group and you have home service help and home care, you can contact your health centre for consultation and possible testing.
- Health, medical and dental care professionals in our region and our municipalities with ongoing symptoms of Covid-19 infection.
- Residents with symptoms of Covid-19 infection.

Antibody test following medical assessment

Region Västernorrland will test for antibodies when a physician deems it medically necessary. The test can be used as a supplement in the diagnosis of patients who are already ill.

Antibody testing in the general public

Antibody tests will be available for the general public at the end of October. Residents over the age of 15 years who have a BankID will then be able to log in to 1177 Vårdguiden's e-services to order an antibody test.

Can I test myself?

The PCR test can be administered in different ways. It can be done by health service staff, or you can take the test yourself using a test kit. You will receive information telling you what to do if you are using a test kit.

There are no serological tests recommended by the Public Health Agency of Sweden that you can take yourself.

Read more about [what you can do if you are having symptoms](#).

How does testing work?

A PCR sample is taken with a swab designed to capture viruses and bacteria in the secretions of the airways.

The test can be taken far up inside the nose. The swab is inserted into the nostril by health service staff or by you.

The swabbing can also be done at the back of the throat. The swab is then inserted through the mouth.

PCR swabs are sometimes taken from both the nose and the throat. The swabbing can be slightly uncomfortable, but it is quick.

A sample is sometimes taken from phlegm that you cough up.

A serological test is a [blood test](#).

The health service staff can wear protective gear

The health service staff may wear special clothes along with masks and visors over their faces. This may not be something you are used to, but it is the normal procedure for certain illnesses.

The idea is to protect the staff from also getting sick and from transferring the illness to other patients. It may be good to mention this to a child or anyone else who is feeling anxious about being examined.

What do I do after receiving my test result?

Your test result contains information about how to interpret it. You are also told who you can contact for more information. You are obligated to comply with the given instructions, as Covid-19 is subject to the [Communicable Diseases Act](#).

What does it mean if my PCR test is positive?

If you tested positive for Covid-19

If your test was positive, you must remain isolated at home to avoid the risk of infecting others.

You must also comply with the Communicable Diseases Act. This is what to do.

If your test shows that you have an ongoing Covid-19 infection, you must stay home for at least seven days from the time you started having symptoms, until you have been fever-free for two days and until you generally feel better. At that point, you are no longer considered contagious.

There is no reason to take a new test in order to see if you are free of infection or otherwise. The test can come back positive for a long time after you are no longer deemed contagious.

During this period, you must:

- Not go to work or school.
- Avoid seeing anyone other than the people you live with.
- Not go to the shops or take public transport.
- Adhere to special hygiene procedures, frequently and carefully wash your hands, use a separate towel and cough into your sleeve or a tissue.
- If you seek care, inform the provider that you are contagious.
- Read the rules of conduct that you need to adhere to according to the Communicable Diseases Act [here](#).

[On the page with advice for self-care, you can find information about what you can do yourself.](#) Contact your health centre if you start feeling any worse!

You may be contacted via telephone by a nurse after receiving a positive test result for follow-up of the test and infection tracing.

A positive PCR test means that the virus is present in your body, but it does not indicate whether you are contagious. There may be traces of the virus left for several weeks without making you contagious. The test will also detect virus which is no longer actively contagious.

[Read more about Covid-19 and how long you may be contagious here.](#)

You do not need to take another test to see if the virus is gone.

Tell others

You may be asked by the health service to tell others whom you may have infected that you have Covid-19, so that they too can get tested. Read more about infection tracing in the article about [the Communicable Diseases Act](#).

What does it mean if my PCR test is negative?

A negative PCR test means that you most likely did not have an ongoing infection when the test was taken.

You can return to work, school or start seeing other people again once you have no fever and you feel better.

However, if you start feeling worse, you must not return to work, school or see other people. You may instead need to take another test.

When am I considered to be immune?

You are considered to be immune to Covid-19 if any of the following applies to you:

- You have tested positive through a PCR test and recovered.
- You have tested positive for antibodies.

The Public Health Agency of Sweden makes the assessment that you are immune for at least six months.

This assessment only applies if you have taken a test that meets the Public Health Agency of Sweden's recommendations. Quick tests taken through a finger prick rarely meet these recommendations.

What does it mean to be immune?

Being immune to Covid-19 means that you are protected from being infected again for a limited period of time.

If you are immune and free of infection, you can see those people who have an increased risk of becoming severely ill from Covid-19.

[If you yourself is at an increased risk of becoming severely ill](#), you do not need to follow the special recommendations for risk groups. You can instead follow the same guidelines as for those with no increased risk. [Read more in the text about Covid-19](#).

Influence and participate in your own care

You are entitled to be included in your own care. A prerequisite for this is that you are able to [understand the information](#) given by health service staff. Ask questions if you need to. You have the right to information regarding treatment options and [how long you may need to wait to be treated](#) for example.

Children are also entitled to be included in their own care. The older the child is, the more important this becomes.

You have the option of requesting [the assistance of an interpreter if you do not speak Swedish.](#) You also have the option of requesting [the assistance of an interpreter if you have a hearing impairment or similar.](#)

MORE INFORMATION ON OTHER WEBSITES

- [The Public Health Agency of Sweden - National strategy for increased testing and laboratory analysis of Covid-19](#)