COVID-19 Testing FAQ

Faculty/Staff

GENERAL INFORMATION

What kind of COVID tests are being offered?

- TAMUS-funded COVID tests: The COVID-19 tests are funded by Texas A&M University and provided by Curative, Inc. These tests are PCR tests (to determine an active COVID-19 infection), are collected via mouth swab, and are available to students, faculty and staff.
- SHS COVID tests: SHS offers two different types of COVID tests available to students, faculty and staff:
  o An antibody blood/serology test to determine the likelihood of a previous COVID-19 infection.
  o A nasal swab/PCR to determine an active COVID-19 infection.
- Texas Division of Emergency Management (TDEM) tests: The COVID-19 tests are funded by TDEM and provided by Curative, Inc. The tests are self-administered in multiple maroon kiosks around the Texas A&M University campus. These tests are PCR tests (to determine an active COVID-19 infection), are collected via mouth swab, and are available to the general public.

Which test should I choose?

- The TAMUS-funded Curative, Inc. COVID tests are available to all students, faculty and staff free of charge. These tests use a mouth swab to detect an active COVID infection.
- The SHS COVID tests are available to all students, faculty and staff, and insurance will be billed for these tests. Insurance may cover the cost in full, but it is encouraged to check with your insurance provider before scheduling the test.
- The TDEM Curative, Inc. COVID tests are available to the general public free of charge. These tests use a mouth swab to detect an active COVID infection.

If I think I have been exposed to COVID, when should I get tested?

- It is generally recommended that an individual waits at least five to seven days after exposure to get tested. The incubation period for COVID can be 5-14 days. Waiting until at least day three after exposure will increase the reliability of the test. While awaiting your testing date/time, please follow the CDC guidelines regarding what to do if you are sick/think you may be sick: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html.

How effective are the COVID tests?

- TAMUS-funded COVID tests / TDEM tests: Curative, Inc. has stated the sensitivity at >90%.
- SHS COVID tests: PCR tests are approximately 90% accurate. PCR tests are most accurate at day 5-7 after a confirmed close contact with an infected individual.
Where can I get a COVID test?

- TAMU-funded COVID tests are available in the white tent located in the parking lot (Lot 27) adjacent to the A.P. Beutel Health Center. The tent utilized for these tests is a negative air pressure isolation tent. This type of system removes bacterial and viral particles from the air at a rapid rate, giving protection to everyone in the tent from airborne infections. Occasionally, alternate sites are set up in other locations based on the needs of the campus community. These sites will be visible to the student during the online scheduling process.

- SHS COVID tests are available within Student Health Services/A.P. Beutel Health Center. Within the clinic, low risk patient testing is performed in a clean room with enhanced disinfection while maintaining at least a 6 foot physical distance from staff and other patients.

- TDEM COVID tests are available in multiple maroon kiosks around the Texas A&M University campus. Current locations include: Aggie Express Commons (676 Lubbock St.), Mays Business School (210 Olsen Blvd.), Rudder Plaza (275 Joe Routt Blvd.). Appointments are not required, but registration and appointment scheduling can be completed in advance at [https://tx.ag/COVIDtest](https://tx.ag/COVIDtest).

NOTICE: Limited parking for SHS COVID testing and TAMU COVID testing is available in Lot 27 for clients at this time. It is recommended that individuals utilizing SHS and/or the testing tent park in Lot 30E. To access the testing tent, please utilize Military Walk. Once you arrive at the tent, please practice physical distancing by waiting on the marked steps near the tent.

Parking in Lot 100J is available for those who are utilizing the Rec Center testing site and do not have a parking permit. There will be a number of marked 2-hour spaces available on the testing dates.

Who is able to utilize the COVID testing at Student Health Services/A.P. Beutel Health Center?

- TAMU students, faculty and staff are able to utilize the TAMUS-funded and SHS testing options.

- To utilize the TAMUS-funded testing: Registration for a testing time window can be found here: [https://tx.ag/COVIDtest](https://tx.ag/COVIDtest). Walk-ups are not currently allowed, and all individuals must register for a testing time window in advance.

- To utilize the SHS COVID testing: students, faculty and staff are able to present via self-referral (no doctor's order is needed). Faculty and staff can self-schedule on the patient portal if they do NOT exhibit any high-risk symptoms. If you cannot access the portal, or if the portal shows you as not eligible to make appointments, please call Patient Services at 458-8310 to be scheduled. Bring a copy of your insurance card when you visit the clinic, or upload it into the patient portal in advance. Schedule your SHS COVID test here: [https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments](https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments).

Can I get tested for COVID more than once?

- You can get tested for COVID more than once, if needed.
**How often is testing available?**
- TAMUS-funded COVID tests: For all available testing events, please visit [https://tx.ag/COVIDtest](https://tx.ag/COVIDtest). Registration for each event typically opens 24-48 hours in advance.
- SHS COVID tests: COVID testing is available Monday-Friday, 8am-4:15pm.

**What should I do if I miss my assigned testing appointment?**
- TAMUS-funded COVID testing: If you miss your testing window, please sign up for a new testing window.
- SHS COVID testing: Please schedule another appointment online so we are able to reserve your testing time.

**If there is inclement weather, will my appointment be cancelled?**
- TAMUS-funded COVID testing: In the event of inclement weather, please contact SHS Patient Services at (979) 458-8310. Patient Services will advise regarding any temporary location changes for the testing events.
- SHS COVID testing: Appointments will not be cancelled unless the faculty/staff member cancels his/her appointment in advance.

**What guidance is there for sick/exposed campus members?**
- If you are sick and/or had a potential exposure to COVID, visit the Texas A&M University COVID page for detailed guidance: [https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/sick-campus-members/](https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/sick-campus-members/).

**Who should I contact if I have any questions?**
- For general questions regarding SHS COVID testing, please contact SHS Patient Services at patientservices@shs.tamu.edu or (979) 458-8310.
- For questions regarding the COVID reporting process, contact COVID19Process@tamu.edu.

**COST**

**Is there a cost associated with COVID testing?**
- TAMUS-funded COVID tests: The Texas A&M University System has purchased a large allotment of Curative testing capacity to be utilized throughout the fall semester. There is no cost for individuals being tested at this time. Subsequent tests are also free of charge to the participant.
- SHS COVID tests: There is a charge associated with SHS testing, yet insurance may reimburse fully or partially for the cost of the test. Please contact Patient Services at (979) 458-8310 for more information. Cash pay prices are listed below.
  - COVID Antibody: $120 (effective 04/20/2020)
  - COVID – PCR: $150 (effective 07/01/2020)
  - COVID – PCR / Influenza A&B: $120 (effective 11/02/2020)
TDEM-funded COVID tests: The Texas Division of Emergency Management has purchased a large allotment of Curative testing capacity to be utilized throughout the state. There is no cost for individuals being tested at this time when using the kiosks. Subsequent tests are also free of charge to the participant.

SYMPTOMS

If I have COVID symptoms, should I get tested?

- The TAMUS-funded COVID tests and SHS COVID tests are available for symptomatic and asymptomatic patients. Please note that symptoms may be due to influenza or other respiratory illnesses. If you are experiencing symptoms, it is recommended that you consider making an appointment with your primary care provider.

What should I do if I think I may be positive and am awaiting results?

- If you have a positive close contact or you have symptoms, please follow quarantine instructions from the CDC. Find these instructions here: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html)

WHAT TO EXPECT

What will the testing process look like?

- TAMUS-funded COVID tests: First, register online to get a testing time window. You will then receive a link for a video teaching the collection process. You should check in at the testing site during your testing window. At the testing site, you will enter the testing area for the mouth swab. When you arrive at the testing site, a number of physical controls have been implemented to ensure your safety. Every individual is physically distanced by 6 or more feet if there is a line and every individual must wear face covering unless they are actively testing. The 6 feet separation is maintained and monitored during the whole process.

If your testing site is at the medical tent located in the SHS parking lot, this tent is a negative pressure isolation medical shelter whose environment meets or exceeds the CDC guidelines for treating airborne viruses like COVID-19 and seasonal flu. Negative pressure air means a lower air pressure is inside the tent compared to the air outside. This difference in pressure allows the outside air to flow into the tent after it passes through the sanitation and filtering process. The air in this tent is replaced with sanitized, filtered air approximately every four minutes. By the time you complete your testing, the air has already been replaced at least once.

The entire test collection process typically takes less than 5 minutes.

- SHS COVID tests: Depending on the testing option you choose, you will either receive a blood draw from an SHS phlebotomist, or you will self-administer an anterior nasal swab with SHS staff instruction and observation. The anterior nasal swab self-collection involves inserting a
small swab less than an inch into each nostril and the entire process typically takes less than 5 minutes. Wait times for the blood draw will vary.

RESULTS

How long do results take, and how can I access them?

- TAMUS-funded COVID tests: Results take 36-48 hours during the week, but there may be a delay on tests done late in the day on Fridays. Results are sent to the email you provided during registration, and will be sent from Curative, Inc.
- SHS COVID tests: Results take 36-48 hours during the week, but there may be a delay on tests done late in the day on Fridays. Results will be sent to you from an SHS medical provider via secure message on the Patient Portal.

If you have not received your results within 48 hours after your test date/time, confirm that the contact information included when you registered for a testing window is accurate. If your contact information is correct, please contact SHS Patient Services at (979) 458-8310.

What happens if I receive a positive test result?

- Make an appointment with your primary medical provider if you would like to further discuss your specific condition.
- Seek emergency medical care immediately if you show any of these signs: trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face.
- For now, stay in isolation in your residence and away from other people. Follow the CDC guidance for home isolation. Representatives from the Department of State Health Services will be calling soon. Their number may indicate "unknown" on your phone, but go ahead and answer it. They will give you more information about isolation duration and also ask about your close contacts. Gather the following information to have ready when they call: how you may have been exposed, recent attendance at events (gyms, bars, salons, events such as houses of worship, sporting events, classes), household members, and close contacts (less than 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes in 24 hours).
- You are required to self-report to the university through the COVID Reporting Portal. This act of Selfless Service will help the university to understand and control the virus on campus and also give you help through the Division of Student Affairs.

What happens if I receive a negative test result?

- If you tested negative but had a confirmed close contact (less than 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes in 24 hours) with an individual who has an active case of COVID, it is recommended you quarantine and stay home for 14 days since last contact.