COVID-19 Testing FAQ

Parent/Guardian

GENERAL INFORMATION

What kind of COVID tests are being offered?

- **Texas A&M University COVID tests:** available to all TAMU students, faculty and staff.
  - Antibody blood/serology test ($): available for a minimal charge at Student Health Services; determines the likelihood of a previous COVID-19 infection
  - Mouth swab/PCR: self-collect mouth swab funded by Texas A&M University System and provided by Curative, Inc.; determines an active COVID-19 infection
  - Nasal swab/PCR ($): self-collect nasal swab available for a minimal charge at Student Health Services; determines an active COVID-19 infection
  - Saliva sample: self-collect saliva sample funded by Texas A&M University System; non-diagnostic COVID test

Which test should my student choose?

- Mouth swab and saliva sample are funded by Texas A&M University and free of charge.
- Antibody blood/serology test and nasal swab are available at Student Health Services for a minimal charge. Insurance will be billed for these tests. Insurance may cover the cost in full, but it is encouraged to check the student's insurance provider before scheduling the test. An SHS medical provider will follow up with the patient and assist in his/her care before and after results are available, and will be able to answer any questions the individual may have regarding COVID-19.

If my student may have been exposed to COVID, what should my student do?

- **If your student chooses to 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 your student awaits the testing date/time, 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](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/if-you-are-sick/steps-when-sick.html).
- **If your student choose to not get tested:** if an individual does not develop any symptoms, but had a confirmed close contact (less than 6 feet for a cumulative total of 15 minutes in 24 hours), it is advised that the individual quarantine for 10 days following the last contact. If the individual develops symptoms within his/her quarantine, consider making an appointment with an SHS clinician at [https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments](https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments) to discuss next steps.
How effective are the COVID tests?

- **Antibody blood/serology test and nasal swab test**: PCR tests are approximately 90% accurate. PCR tests are most accurate at day 5-7 after a confirmed close contact with an infected individual.
- **Mouth swab tests**: Curative, Inc. has stated the sensitivity at >90%.

Where can my student get a COVID test?

- Appointments are required for the following test options: antibody blood/serology test, mouth swab, nasal swab.
  - Antibody blood/serology and/or nasal swab appointments at Student Health Services: [https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments](https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments).
  - Mouth swab appointments via Curative: [https://tx.ag/covidtest](https://tx.ag/covidtest)
- Walk-ups are available for saliva sample option.
- For additional information regarding COVID testing options, locations and availability, please visit [https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/testing-locations/index.html](https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/testing-locations/index.html).

- **NOTICE REGARDING STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES TESTING OPTIONS**: 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. Limited parking for SHS 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.

How often is testing available?

- **Antibody blood/serology and nasal swab tests**: available in Student Health Services Monday – Friday, 8am – 4:15pm
- **Mouth swab and saliva sample tests**: find testing availability online at [https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/testing-locations/index.html](https://www.tamu.edu/coronavirus/testing-locations/index.html).

What guidance is there for sick/exposed campus members?

- If your student is 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 questions regarding the COVID reporting process, contact COVID19Process@tamu.edu.
- For questions regarding delayed/missing test results, contact COVID@tamu.edu.
- For general questions regarding SHS COVID testing, please contact Patient Services at patient-services@shs.tamu.edu or (979) 458-8310.
Is there a cost associated with COVID testing?

- Texas A&M University COVID tests:
  - Antibody blood/serology test ($): available at Student Health Services; pricing outlined below
  - Mouth swab/PCR: funded by Texas A&M University System
  - Nasal swab/PCR ($): available at Student Health Services; pricing outlined below
  - Saliva sample: funded by Texas A&M University System; non-diagnostic COVID test

- 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.
  - COVID Antibody: $100 (effective 03/15/2020)
  - COVID – PCR: $110 (effective 03/15/2020)
  - COVID – PCR / Influenza A&B: $80 (effective 11/02/2020)

SYMPTOMS

What should my student do if they may be positive and are awaiting results?

- If your student had a positive close contact or has 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

WHAT TO EXPECT

What will the testing process look like?

- Texas A&M University COVID tests:
  - Antibody blood/serology test:
    1. Schedule an appointment online: https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments
    2. Check in at the health center prior to the appointment time. Your student will be directed to visit the appropriate clinic area. Wait times will vary.
    3. During the appointment, your student will receive a blood draw from an SHS phlebotomist. Collection typically takes less than 5 minutes.
    4. Results will be communicated through the SHS Patient Portal.

  - Mouth swab/PCR:
    1. Register online to get a testing time window: https://tx.ag/COVIDtest
    2. Watch the video sent to the registration email to learn about the collection process.
    3. Check in at the testing site during your testing window. A number of physical controls have been implemented to ensure your student’s 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.

4. Your student will be guided by staff regarding how to properly self-collect the sample. The entire collection process typically takes less than 5 minutes.

5. Results will be sent to your student’s email.

- Nasal swab/PCR:
  1. Schedule an appointment online: https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments.
  2. Check in at the health center prior to the appointment time. Your student will be directed to visit the appropriate clinic area. Wait times will vary.
  3. During your student's appointment, he/she will be guided by staff regarding how to properly self-collect the anterior nasal swab sample. This involves inserting a small swab less than an inch into each nostril. The entire collection process typically takes less than 5 minutes.
  4. Results will be communicated through the SHS Patient Portal.

- Saliva sample:
  1. Check in at the testing site during the available time options. 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.
  2. Your student will be guided by staff regarding how to properly self-collect the sample. The entire collection process typically takes less than 5 minutes.
  3. Results will be sent to your student’s email.

- NOTICE REGARDING MEDICAL TENT TESTING LOCATION: If the 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 an individual completes his/her testing, the air has already been replaced at least once.

RESULTS

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

- Results can take 36-48 hours during the week, but there may be a delay on tests done late in the day on Fridays.
  - Antibody blood/serology test and nasal swab test results: Results will be sent from an SHS medical provider via secure message on the SHS Patient Portal.
  - Mouth swab test results: Results are sent to the email provided during registration, and will be sent from Curative, Inc.
Student Health Services
DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

- **Saliva sample test results**: Results are sent to the email provided during registration.

- **NOTICE REGARDING MOUTH SWAB TEST RESULTS**: If your student has not received results within 48 hours after the test date/time, confirm that the contact information included when your student registered for a testing window is accurate. If the contact information is correct, please email covid@tamu.edu.

**What happens if my student receives a positive test result?**

- **If your student gets tested and receives a positive test result:**
  - He/she will be contacted by an SHS medical provider via secure message. This message will provide your student with medical information and links to campus support services; the provider can also answer any questions or address any concerns your student may have.
  - Your student should seek emergency medical care immediately if they 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, your student should stay in isolation in his/her 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 the phone, but it should still be answered. They will give your student more information about isolation duration and also ask about any close contacts. Have your student gather the following information to have ready when they call: how he/she 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).
  - Your student is 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 your student help through the Division of Student Affairs.

**What happens if my student receives a negative test result?**

- If your student tested negative (test must occur day 5 or later after exposure), and is showing no symptoms, please note the following:
  - SARS-CoV-1 was not detected in your student's specimen. Your student should not immediately act as though he/she is free of COVID-19.
  - If your student had been quarantining, it is recommended your student can end quarantine according to the CDC and local guidelines.
  - Continue to watch for symptoms until 14 days after exposure.
  - If your student begins developing symptoms, immediately self-isolate. Consider scheduling an appointment with an SHS medical provider (https://shs.tamu.edu/appointments) to discuss next steps.
  - Continue to wear a mask, stay at least 6 feet from others, wash your hands, avoid crowds, and take other steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19.