

April 29, 2020

South Dakota Guidance on Evaluating Persons for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Infection

General Testing Recommendations

Medical providers should consider testing individuals, using a viral test, with the following signs and symptoms of COVID-19: (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>)

- Cough or
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

Or at least two of these symptoms:

- Fever
- Chills
- Repeated shaking with chills
- Muscle pain
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Please note that not everyone may need a test because most people have mild illness and can recover at home without medical care.

Two kinds of tests are available for COVID-19: viral tests and antibody tests.

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/testing.html>)

- A viral test tells you if you have a current infection (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/diagnostic-testing.html>)
- An antibody test might tell you if you had a previous infection, but a “positive” test is difficult to interpret due to the variable performance of the antibody tests currently available (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/testing/serology-overview.html>)

Testing at the South Dakota Public Health Laboratory

The following groups of individuals will be prioritized for testing:

- Hospitalized patients
- Healthcare workers, first responders, and active military, with symptoms
- Individuals living or working in institutional settings, such as long-term care facilities, with symptoms
- Underinsured or uninsured individuals, with symptoms
- Low-income individuals or those unable to pay for testing, with symptoms
- Homeless individuals with symptoms

If you test positive or negative for COVID-19, no matter the type of test, you still should take preventive measure to protect yourself and others. Preventive measures include the following:

(<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/prevention.html>)

- Know how COVID-19 spreads to avoid being exposed to the virus
- Wash your hands often
- Avoid close contact with others outside your home
- Cover your mouth and nose with a cloth face cover when around others, such as at the grocery store or to pick up other necessities
- Cover coughs and sneezes to prevent the spread of the virus
- Clean and disinfect frequently touches surfaces daily