HOT SHEET

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Testing Messages

There are a number of viral respiratory germs circulating right now. We understand the desire of people who are currently sick to be tested for COVID-19, along with those who fear they may be infected with COVID-19 but are currently asymptomatic.

Public Health – Seattle & King County does not typically conduct testing. Testing is typically conducted by taking a swab at a health care provider's office.

Who should get tested?

Not everybody who feels ill needs to be tested, particularly if you have mild illness. Healthcare providers determine who should be tested. While testing is becoming more available, there are still limitations in the ability to quickly collect and process tests.

If you are sick with fever, cough or shortness of breath and are in a high risk group, call your healthcare provider to discuss whether you should be tested for COVID-19.

- People at high risk for complications from COVID-19 are:
- People older than 60 years
- People with chronic medical conditions
- People with weakened immune systems
- Pregnant people

Other people with mild illness who are concerned about their health can call their healthcare provider to discuss COVID-19 testing and other possible reasons for their illness.

What has changed about testing availability?

While testing is becoming more available, there are limitations in providers' capacity to obtain samples and process lab results rapidly.

When the test was first released, it was only approved for emergency use. This has recently changed as more testing capacity is becoming more available. Now, if you have symptoms and are high risk, we encourage you to call your health care provider and have a conversation with them about whether it makes sense for you to get tested for COVID-19. Your provider will determine whether testing is recommended.

Where can I get tested?

Public Health – Seattle & King County does not typically conduct testing. Testing is typically conducted by taking a swab at a health care provider's office. Call ahead before visiting your healthcare provider.