COVID-19 Testing

Essential Information About the Process

CDC: Clinicians are requested to work with their local and state health departments to coordinate testing. Patients highly suspected of COVID-19 must be reported to local public health and advised to isolate until test results are available.

Patient goes to clinic with health concerns and asks to be tested for COVID-19.

Current Testing Schedule for the Montana Public Health Lab

If the sample is received by 11am, your team will receive results within 1-2 days.

Tests will be run 7 days a week.

Schedule as of 3/13/2020

Complete a patient assessment and medical evaluation.

Are patient symptoms/conditions consistent with CDC* guidance?

Common Symptoms may include:
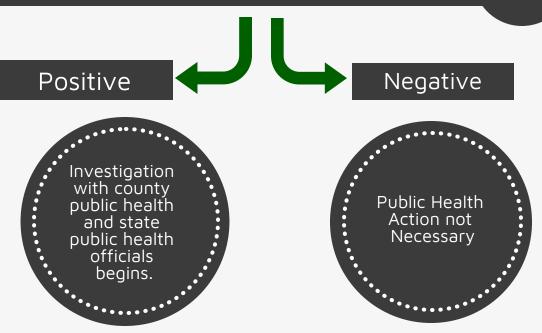
FEVER

SHORTNESS OF BREATH

COUGH

NO

YES

DO NOT TEST

Collect a nasopharyngeal swab.

Send to MPHL or other lab for testing.

Positive

Negative

***Updated Guidance on Evaluating and Testing Persons for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) CDC Health Alert Network**

Clinicians should use their judgment to determine if a patient has signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and whether the patient should be tested. Most patients with confirmed COVID-19 have developed fever and/or symptoms of acute respiratory illness (e.g., cough, difficulty breathing).
Priorities for testing include:

1. Hospitalized patients who have signs and symptoms compatible with COVID-19 in order to inform decisions related to infection control.
2. Other symptomatic individuals such as, older adults (age ≥ 65 years) and individuals with chronic medical conditions and/or an immunocompromised state that may put them at higher risk for poor outcomes (e.g., diabetes, heart disease, receiving immunosuppressive medications, chronic lung disease, chronic kidney disease).
3. Any persons including healthcare personnel, who within 14 days of symptom onset had close contact with a suspect or laboratory-confirmed COVID-19 patient, or who have a history of travel from affected geographic areas within 14 days of their symptom onset.

Investigation with county public health and state public health officials begins.

Public Health Action not Necessary

Updated March 13, 2020