

Important testing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians



Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing

This information is to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians understand the symptoms of coronavirus, what to look out for and when to get tested.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new kind of virus that is spreading fast across many communities in Australia, and in other countries. Coronavirus (COVID-19) can make some people very sick and can lead to severe illness, including difficulty breathing and pneumonia.

Testing is now available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who show symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19), such as breathing difficulties, sore throat, cough, or fever high temperature.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Victorians are a high-risk group for coronavirus (COVID-19) due to higher rates of **pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes, heart and lung disease** compared to non-Aboriginal people. This is why it is important that Aboriginal people who have coronavirus (COVID-19) symptoms get tested early to ensure they can be treated quickly.

When to get tested for coronavirus?

If you are an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person and have a fever at or above 38 degrees OR have symptoms of an acute respiratory infection (shortness of breath, cough, sore throat) you can arrange for testing by contacting:

- the coronavirus 24-hour hotline 1800 675 398
- an Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation
- your doctor, clinic or health service
- the emergency department at your local hospital – but call first so they can tell you the best thing to do and where to go. It's also important to let them know you are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander so that you can access coronavirus testing.

We recognise Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCO) are culturally safe places and that you may prefer to be treated by your local ACCO.

Not all ACCOs are able to provide testing. The department is working closely with ACCOs to support testing within the community. If your local ACCO is not able to perform the test they will be able to provide advice on the closest testing clinic.

If you have serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, call 000 and ask for an ambulance.

You can also find more information on our [coronavirus website](#).

What should I do when I have been tested?

Self-quarantine

If you have been tested for coronavirus (COVID-19) – even if you have not travelled overseas - then you need to self-quarantine until your results are returned to prevent the virus from spreading.

While you are in self-quarantine you must not leave your home unless you are seeking medical attention. If possible, you must stay in a separate room from others in your house.

Stay up to date by visiting our [coronavirus website](#) for the latest advice for Victorians and people visiting Victoria.

What will happen when I get my test results back?

It may take several days for your results to come back. The facility where you get tested will advise how and when you can expect to receive your results.

If you test positive, you will receive care at home or in hospital depending on the severity of your symptoms.

If you test negative, stay at home until you are completely well.

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone 03 9096 5656, or email [Aboriginal Strategy and Oversight](mailto:Aboriginal.Strategy.and.Oversight@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <aboriginalstrategyandoversight@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

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