Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing not only provides a diagnosis, it allows for earlier detection, timelier quarantine, accuracy in positive case reporting, treatments and more responsive contact tracing. In addition, testing leads to the early identification of outbreaks in neighborhoods, workplaces, and shared living situations.

**ARE THERE DIFFERENT KINDS OF COVID-19 TESTS?**

There are two testing types available for Wisconsin residents.

**Viral Testing**
- Checks samples from the respiratory system to diagnose a current COVID-19 infection.
- Results are only good for the day the individual was tested.
- A negative test result means the individual did not have the virus at the time of testing or the sample was collected too early. Individuals can also be exposed to, and get COVID-19, after a test. If symptoms develop later, individuals may need to be tested again.
- Administered via nasal swab or saliva sample:
  - Nasal swab involves placing a 6-inch long swab into each nasal cavity and rotating for 15 seconds. The swab is placed in a sterile container and sent to a lab for testing.
  - Saliva testing involves collecting an individual’s saliva in a sterile container and sending it to a lab for testing.

**Antibody Testing**
- Blood test that identifies if you have already been infected with COVID-19.
- Can take 1-2 weeks after symptoms occur for the body to make antibodies.
- One in every five or six infected people do not develop detectable antibodies.
- Antibody levels have been found to drop significantly within 2-3 months.

**HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO GET RESULTS?**

Some viral tests are point-of-care tests with results available at the testing site in less than an hour. Other tests have to be sent to a lab and results are available in 1-3 days. Some areas experience a high demand for testing, which can cause a delay in results.

(Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Food and Drug Administration)
WHO SHOULD GET TESTED?

Anyone with COVID-19 symptoms or anyone who has been exposed to COVID-19 should get tested. If you think you need to get tested:

- Call your doctor. If you do not have a primary care provider, call 211.
- Complete an online health screening assessment and a licensed healthcare practitioner will contact you. https://www.wihealthconnect.com/
- Find a local community testing site (https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/community-testing.htm). Testing at these sites is free. Some locations may require a doctor’s note or appointment to receive a test.

While waiting for test results, take steps to keep yourself and others safe and follow recommendations to self-quarantine and self-monitor in order to protect yourself and your community from COVID-19.

(Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Food and Drug Administration)