

Here Is the Latest on Testing, Caring for COVID-19 Patients By David Doolittle

 [texmed.org/TexasMedicineDetail.aspx](https://www.texmed.org/TexasMedicineDetail.aspx)



As our understanding of COVID-19 continues to grow, the steps you should take to test and care for patients safely have evolved.

That's why the Texas Medical Association's COVID-19 Task Force has updated its frequently asked questions (FAQ) documents on testing for the illness, and how to protect your practice and patients.

The documents are based on the latest guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), and other health organizations.

Testing

TMA's COVID-19 Testing Information FAQ has been updated with information such as testing people with symptoms consistent with COVID-19, testing asymptomatic people, and testing to determine resolution of infection.

“Viral testing for SARS-CoV-2 is considered to be diagnostic when conducted among individuals with symptoms consistent with COVID-19 or among asymptomatic individuals with known or suspected recent exposure to SARS-CoV-2 to control transmission, or to determine resolution of infection,” the FAQ says. “CDC does not currently recommend using antibody testing as the sole basis for diagnosis of acute infection, and antibody tests are not authorized by FDA for such diagnostic purposes.”

Among other questions the FAQ answers:

- Which patients should physicians test for COVID-19? And are there patients who should be prioritized for testing?
- Who should not get tested?
- What infection prevention measures are necessary in outpatient settings?
- Is testing for COVID-19 available through commercial laboratories?
- Which private and public labs are testing?
- How do insurers pay for COVID-19 testing?
- Do I report a positive test result for COVID-19?

In addition, TMA’s Quick How-To Testing Guide for Outpatient Clinics, a companion piece to the Testing Information FAQ, has been updated to include new information on antigen, serology (antibody), at-home, and saliva tests.

Infection Prevention and Control

The updated FAQ on Infection Prevention and Control for Outpatient Clinics includes new recommendations on wearing masks, determining whether a patient should schedule an in-office or telemedicine visit, and handling staffing shortages if employees become sick.

Among the questions the FAQ answers:

- How can clinics minimize exposure to COVID-19?
- What types of infection prevention control measures should clinics implement?
- What infection prevention and control precautions should be taken if a patient with possible COVID-19 requires evaluation at an emergency department? and
- What infection prevention and control recommendations should clinics give to patients with suspected COVID-19 who are well enough to go home?

Find all three documents, along with the latest news, resources, and government guidance, on TMA’s COVID-19 Resource Center, which is updated regularly.

Last Updated On

June 23, 2020

Related Content

Coronavirus

David Doolittle

Editor

(512) 370-1385

david.doolittle[at]texmed[dot]org

Dave Doolittle is editor of *Texas Medicine* and *Texas Medicine Today*. Dave grew up in Austin, where he attended culinary school as well as the University of Texas. He spent years covering Central Texas for the *Austin American-Statesman* newspaper. He is the father of two girls, a proud Longhorn, and an avid motorsports fan.

More stories by David Doolittle

