

Tips for Testing Children for COVID-19 At Home



Washtenaw County
Health Department

- At-home antigen tests are authorized for children ages 2 and up.
- Read and follow all test kit manufacturer instructions when testing your child.
- Saliva testing may be more tolerated, but can be difficult for children 5 and under.

Tips for testing kids at home:

- **Keep it calm.** It may help your child feel calmer if only one person is talking to them about the test at a time. If it helps, you can turn the lights down for the test.
- **Talk it through.** Using words they can understand at their age, tell them why they need to take the test. If they want to know, walk them through step-by-step what will happen when you do the test.
- **Let them feel what they are feeling.** It is okay for them to feel afraid, angry, or worried. It may help them feel better if you say this out loud.
- **Give them comfort and choices.** Let them pick something they like to hold or look at during the test. You can also sing a song together, count, or talk about something they like.
- **Get help.** If there is another adult your child trusts, it can be helpful to have one adult hold your child while you swab your child's nose. This depends on how old your child is and how easy it is for them to sit still. For example, a preschool-aged child might feel more relaxed sitting in a parent or caregiver's lap. The parent or caregiver can wrap a leg around the child's legs and hold the child's arms still with their arms, and the other adult can help to hold the child's head still while swabbing their nose.
- **Know when to take a break.** If your child is not able to stay still or is very upset, you may not be able to do the test safely or do it well enough to be able to trust that the test result is right. It is okay to take a break and try again with a new test when everyone is calm.
- **Praise.** Remember to praise your child after the test is done. It can be helpful to be specific (e.g., "You did a great job counting while I was rubbing your nose!").

Additional resources from the American Academy of Pediatrics:

- [COVID-19 Testing and Kids: What You Should Know](#)
- [How to Talk to Your Child About Their Positive COVID-19 Test](#)

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This resource is for information only and is not meant to be used for self-diagnosis or as a substitute for consultation with a health care provider. For more information, contact your health care provider or visit the CDC website at www.cdc.gov.

Adapted from materials by the San Francisco Department of Public Health & the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

Learn more about
COVID-19 tests at
<https://bit.ly/testWCHD>



See what to do if someone
is sick or was exposed at
<https://bit.ly/COVIDiq>

