

Who should be tested for SARS-CoV-2?

Regardless of vaccination status or COVID-19 disease history.

Higher priority

Suspected cases of COVID-19

Prioritization should be considered for:

- Suspected cases at a higher risk of developing severe disease / requiring hospitalization and / or symptomatic inpatients
- First symptomatic individuals in a closed setting (workplace, schools, hotels, etc.)

Medium priority

Asymptomatic individuals with risk of exposure

Asymptomatic individuals at higher risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection include:

- Contacts of confirmed or probable cases
- People who are frequently exposed through their occupation, such as health and care workers

Lower priority

Asymptomatic individuals with no known risk of exposure

Widespread testing of asymptomatic individuals, including through self-testing, is not currently recommended due to limited evidence on impact and cost-effectiveness.



Policies to test outside these recommendations should consider:

- Timely and reliable testing of suspected cases is maintained as the priority strategy
- There are available human and financial resources for testing, reporting, isolation, contact tracing and follow-up of all test-positive individuals

For more information see WHO guidance June 2021: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-lab-testing-2021.1-eng and Oct 2021: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/antigen-detection-in-the-diagnosis-of-sars-cov-2infection-using-rapid-immunoassays and March 2022: https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-2019-nCoV-Ag-RDTs-Self_testing-2022.1