COVID FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTONS

**What constitutes an exposure?**

A **significant exposure** is defined as one where you spent at least 15 minutes at less than 6 feet distance from a person with COVID or someone who was diagnosed with COVID less than 2 days after your exposure. Other exposures such as handshakes, hugs, brief talking do not require isolation, but should put you on alert.

**I think I may have been exposed, what do I do?**

Try to determine if you had a significant exposure as above. If not, continue to follow social distancing and masking guidelines.rvss

Be alert for symptoms. Watch for fever, cough, shortness of breath, or other symptoms of COVID.

Take your temperature and follow CDC guidance if you have symptoms.

**I had a significant exposure, should I get tested and when?**

That’s a tough question. Because of the incubation period, you may become positive anywhere from 2-14 days after exposure. A negative test during that time doesn’t mean you can let your guard down. An early positive test might help you to notify others that you have been around that they have been exposed. On the other hand, testing too early can mean you might get a false negative result and would need to repeat the test later. In times when tests are in short supply, these circumstances become more important, and tests might have to be reserved for those who have symptoms.

**Where can I get tested?**

CARES is doing test MWF, for our patients, we can schedule you through us.

NEARMC is scheduling testing T-Th call 256 235-5600

Calhoun County Health department is doing testing T-Th 888 264-2256

There are periodic tests in the community, Anniston Star frequently gives notice

**I was exposed, and my test was negative, what next?**

If you had a significant exposure as defined above, you should continue to self-isolate until at least 14 days after your exposure because of the incubation period. If your exposure was less than that, maintain normal precautions and be on the lookout for illness, checking your temperature daily. Try to stay away from vulnerable people.

**I tested positive, what do I do now?**

If you are asymptomatic, you must do self-isolation until 10 days after your test was taken, or if you become symptomatic, until symptoms of cough, shortness of breath are resolved for at least 3 days and fever is gone for over 24 hours. See also “What if I get sick?” You may return to work 10 days after your positive test or onset of symptoms AND your symptoms have improved for 3 days and fever has been gone for 2 days.

**An employee tested positive, what do we do as a company?**

We recommend you remove the employee from work immediately. They/you should determine if anyone had a [significant exposure](#defsigexp) as mentioned above. If so, those exposed should follow the [significant exposure recommendations](#sigexprec). Those without a significant exposure should follow routine precautions including social distancing and masking when not distanced. It is not recommended to require everyone in the department who did not have a significant exposure to get tested before returning to work because a negative test does not mean they will not become positive, and may give a false sense of security. In addition, getting tested may result in unnecessary delays and testing. CDC says the positive employee may return to work 10 days after their positive test (or symptom onset) AND their symptoms have improved for 3 days and fever has been gone for 2 days.

**When can I go back to work, see family, ect?**

Depends on whether you have symptoms or a positive test, see questions above.

**What about the rapid test?**

The sensitivity of the rapid test has not been yet demonstrated to be reliable enough to exclude present COVID disease. It is only helpful if the result is positive.

**What about an antibody test?**

The antibody test is good for determining how much COVID has been in a community, but is not very helpful for telling if you have immunity or had a past infection because the test may not remain positive for very long, and even then, a positive test does not totally mean you could not get re-infected.

**What should I do if I get sick or someone in my house gets sick?**

Most people who get COVID-19 will be able to recover at home. **CDC has directions for people who are recovering at home and their caregivers, including:**

* Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.
* Use a separate room and bathroom for sick household members (if possible).
* Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
* If soap and water are not readily available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Always wash hands with soap and water if hands are visibly dirty.
* Provide your sick household member with clean disposable facemasks to wear at home, if available, to help prevent spreading COVID-19 to others.
* Clean the sick room and bathroom, as needed, to avoid unnecessary contact with the sick person.

However, some people may need emergency medical attention. Watch for symptoms and learn **when to seek emergency medical attention.**

When to Seek Emergency Medical Attention

Look for **emergency warning signs\* for COVID-19. If someone is showing any of these signs, seek emergency medical care immediately**

* Trouble breathing
* Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
* New confusion
* Inability to wake or stay awake
* Bluish lips or face

**Call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.**