Erie County Department of Health
Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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Choosing a COVID-19 test

Updated as of Aug. 11, 2022
For additional information or questions, call 814-451-6700 option 2

I am in a circumstance where I should get tested and:

I have NOT had COVID-19 or I have NOT had a positive test within the past 90 days
You may choose a NAAT (the test you get at a pharmacy or doctor's office, also called a PCR test) or antigen test (home test, rapid test)

I have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 90 days
- My first positive test results was within 30 days or less:
    1. I have symptoms
        - Use antigen tests. If negative, multiple tests may be necessary
    2. I do not have symptoms
        - Testing is not recommended to detect a new infection

- My first positive test result was within 31-90 days:
    1. I have symptoms
        - Use antigen tests. If negative, multiple tests may be necessary
    2. I do not have symptoms
        - Use antigen tests, if negative, multiple tests may be necessary

After a positive test result, you may continue to test positive for some time after. You may continue to test positive on antigen tests for a few weeks after your initial positive. You may continue to test positive on NAATs for up to 90 days. Reinfections can occur within 90 days, which can make it hard to know if a positive test indicates a new infection. Consider consulting a healthcare provider if you have any questions or concerns about your individual circumstances.