

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Updated as of March 24, 2020

Pacific Diagnostic Laboratories (PDL) has updated the frequently asked questions due to the changing situation with the COVID-19 pandemic. PDL's primary focus continues to be the safety of the public, patients, healthcare providers, and our employees.

FAQ FOR PATIENTS:

Q: Can anyone be tested for COVID-19?

A: No, not at this time. Individuals seeking testing should call their provider or contact their local public health.

Q: Can I order my own testing for COVID-19?

A: No. The COVID-19 test can ONLY be ordered by physicians or other authorized healthcare providers. Self-ordered testing for COVID-19 is not available. Individuals seeking testing should call their provider or contact their local public health.

Q: I have symptoms and/or I have been exposed to someone that is positive, what should I do?

A: Call your doctor. If you think you have been exposed to COVID-19 and develop a fever and symptoms such as cough or difficulty breathing, call your healthcare provider for medical advice. For more information please visit the Center for Disease Control website at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>

Q: Can I get my COVID-19 specimen collection done at a PDL patient service center?

A: No. PDL does **NOT** offer any collection services for this testing. Specimen collection for COVID-19 testing **MUST** be performed by a *physician or other healthcare provider*. Please **DO NOT** come to at PSC location if you think you are sick with COVID-19 or have been exposed to COVID-19. Call your healthcare provider.

Q: My provider collected and sent in a COVID-19 test on me, when will I get results?

A: The current turnaround time for COVID-19 testing at our referral lab, LabCorp, is 5-7 days due to high demand and limited capacity. Please note that LabCorp is adding testing systems as quickly as possible to expand their testing capabilities. We anticipate the turnaround time will improve with these changes.

Q: I have a routine lab order from my provider, should I still come in to get it done?

A: Check with your provider to determine if your lab testing can be delayed. If the lab testing cannot be delayed, PDL Patient Service Center (PSC) locations are open. Please note: Our PSC hours of operation may have changed so please check our website or call.

Q: Is it safe to come and get my routine lab work done at a PDL Patient Service Center (PSC)?

A: Yes. It is safe to come to a PDL Patient Service Center. PDL adheres to OSHA and CDC guidelines. When at our facilities we ask that you adhere to social distancing guidelines. If a patient is observed to have respiratory symptoms, PDL will provide a mask and the patient will be asked to leave for the safety of the other patients and our staff.

Q: Are pregnant patients okay to be around other patients in a PSC?

A: Check with your provider for guidance.

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Q: How many patients are in a PSC at one time?

A: The number of patients at a PSC can vary. In general, PSC locations are slower in the afternoon, which may provide the shortest wait time and limit exposure to other patients. PDL adheres to OSHA and CDC guidelines. When at our facilities we ask that you adhere to social distancing guidelines. If a patient is observed to have respiratory symptoms, PDL will provide a mask and the patient will be asked to leave for the safety of the other patients and our staff.

Q: Are the staff at the PDL location wearing personal protective equipment (PPE)?

A: PDL staff is wearing the appropriate PPE for blood collections and other collections done at the PSC.

PLEASE NOTE: PDL PSC locations do NOT collect nasopharyngeal (NP) swabs for respiratory testing including COVID-19. A physician or other healthcare provider must do NP collections.

Q: How can I protect myself?

A: Every person has a role to play. Follow the instructions provided by your local public health department and the CDC.

- **Wash your hands often** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds
- **Avoid touching** your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands
- **Avoid close contact** with people who are sick
- **Put distance between** yourself and other people
- **Cover coughs and sneezes**
- **Stay home** except to get medical care
- **Stay informed** by checking for updates regularly from your local public health department, as well as the CDC

Q: What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

A: As noted by the CDC: Typically, human coronaviruses cause mild-to-moderate respiratory illness.

Symptoms are very similar to the flu, including:

- ***Sore throat, fever, cough, shortness of breath, diarrhea, fatigue/weakness.***

COVID-19 can cause more severe respiratory illness. People at higher risk of getting very sick from this illness include older adults, individuals with compromised immune systems, and individuals who have serious chronic medical conditions (e.g.: heart disease, diabetes, lung disease).

For detailed information please visit the CDC or your local public health website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Q: Where can I find more information and get updates?

A: Contact your **local public health department** for more information and direction for your specific community.

Additionally, information is available online at:

- California Public Health (CDPH): <https://www.cdph.ca.gov>
- Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>
- Cottage Health: <https://www.cottagehealth.org/covid19>
- SB County Public Health: <https://www.countyofsb.org/phd/dcp/novel-corona-virus.sbc>
- SLO County Public Health: <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Health-Agency/Public-Health.aspx>
- Ventura County Public Health: <https://www.ventura.org/covid19/>

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FAQ FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS

Q: What test does PDL offer for Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19)?

A: PDL is offering the **2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19), NAA (LAB10716)** test through LabCorp, our primary reference lab. The COVID-19 test is intended for use in the detection of SARS-CoV-2 to assist in the diagnosis of COVID-2019 infections.

The COVID-19 test is orderable as an individual test, as well as a reflex from a negative Respiratory Panel PCR.

Healthcare providers should follow CDC and local public health guidelines on determining appropriate testing. As the situation is very dynamic, it is important to check for updates frequently.

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19), NAA PDL Lab Code: LAB10716	Referred to LabCorp
<p>Turnaround Time: 3-4 days</p> <p>Specimen Type/Container: <i>Nasopharyngeal (NP) swabs in viral transport medium (preferred)</i>, eSwab™, or saline. Note: NP Swab in UTM is required if the Respiratory Panel PCR is ordered on the same specimen.</p> <p>Also acceptable: Oropharyngeal (OP) collection in viral transport medium, eSwab™, or saline, OP or NP washes/aspirates, bronchial washing or bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) in sterile cups</p> <p>Swabs in Saline: OP or NP swabs (cotton or synthetic tip ONLY – no calcium alginate tips, wood shaft swab or swabs in preservative) placed in 1 to 3 mL of sterile saline (0.85- 0.9%) in a screw cap tube.</p>	
RESPIRATORY PANEL BY PCR W/ REFLEX COVID-19 PDL Lab Code: LAB10721	Performed by PDL
<p>Reflex: <i>COVID-19 LAB10716 to LabCorp if panel is NEGATIVE</i></p> <p>Turnaround Time: Performed the same day as received; acute care testing takes priority.</p> <p>Specimen Type/Container: <i>Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab in viral transport medium (UTM or M5)</i></p>	

Q: Where can the specimen collection supplies be obtained?

A: Collection supplies for this testing are ordered through the standard supply request process.

SUPPLY NAME	ORDER #	QUANTITY
BD™ Universal Viral Transport Media (UVT/UTM) <i>Includes Flocked Sterile Swab</i>	1026	BUNDLE of 5
Sterile (UA) Cup	614	BAG of 100

- **SHARE WITH RESPIRATORY PANEL:** Respiratory Panel and COVID-19 can be done off of ONE NP collection.
- **ALLOCATION** measures are in place for the UVT/UTM kits due to a national supply shortage.
- **ORDER REVIEW:** Your office utilization will be taken into consideration in our review of supply requests. Your sales representative may reach out for more information regarding your request.

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Q: Who can collect the specimen?

A: Specimen collection MUST be performed by the physician or other healthcare provider.

- PDL does **NOT** offer any collection services for this testing.
- **DO NOT** direct suspect COVID-19 patients to a Patient Service Center.
- Contact PDL dispatch for pickup from provider office if routine pickup is not already scheduled.

Q: If the result is positive, when will the ordering provider receive notification?

A: A positive result is treated as a critical value and will be called in accordance to the critical value procedure. As a courtesy, PDL will also be calling the negative results.

Q: Is this a reportable result to Public Health?

A: Yes, this is a reportable test to Public Health.

State Public Health notification: LabCorp will be notifying State Public Health for positive results.

Local/County Public Health notification: Providers are required to report positive results to local Public Health.

- *SB County Public Health 24/7 (805) 681-5280*
- *SLO County Public Health M-F (805) 781-5500; after hours and weekends (805) 781-4553*
- *Ventura County Public Health (805) 465-6650*

Q: How much does the COVID-19 test cost?

A: The test price is \$51.31. (Note: a handling charge may apply.)

Please note that PDL is holding all billing on the COVID-19 testing at this time. An update will be provided when this status changes.

Q: Where can I find more information and get updates?

A: Contact your **local public health** for more information and direction for your specific community. Additionally, information is available online:

- California Public Health (CDPH): <https://www.cdph.ca.gov>
- Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/index.html>
- Cottage Health: <https://www.cottagehealth.org/covid19>
- SB County Public Health: <https://www.countyofsb.org/phd/dcp/novel-corona-virus.sbc>
- SLO County Public Health: <https://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Departments/Health-Agency/Public-Health.aspx>
- Ventura County Public Health: <https://www.ventura.org/covid19/>