What Should You Do if You Think You Have COVID-19?

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

- Typical symptoms of COVID-19 infection are: **cough**, **shortness of breath**, **fever**, **chills**, **muscle aches**, **headache**, **sore throat**, and a **loss of taste or smell.**
- Less common symptoms include diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, runny nose or chest pain.

If you have symptoms and are concerned, seek medical advice:

- Consult with your clinician *by phone* as soon as you notice symptoms, especially if you are over 60 or living with a *high-risk condition* like diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, or a weak immune system. People with these conditions are at risk for more serious illness.
- If you don't have a clinician and/or insurance, call MassHealth's Customer service number: 800-841-2900 or TTY: 800-497-4648; or contact Health Connector online at: **www.mahealthconnector.org**.

Your clinician will help arrange to have you tested for COVID-19:

- This may require an order from your clinician.
- You can find a test site here:
    - List of test sites in Massachusetts
    - Interactive map with useful filters
- *Call the testing site ahead of time* to check that they are open and accept your insurance.
- Per the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MA-DPH), the correct test for infection with COVID-19 is the **PCR ("viral") test.**
- Some sites offer a "package" that includes an antibody test that looks for past infection. Please be aware that *this test is not useful to diagnose current infections* and can be expensive. This test is often not covered by insurance.

Note: A negative test result means you were probably not infected at the time you did the test. But these tests are not 100% accurate. Even if your test is negative, there is always a chance that you are infected. So if you suspect you have COVID-19, *act as if you have it*.

If you test positive for COVID-19 or suspect that you are infected, you need to self-isolate--even if you have no symptoms. This means:

- **Stay home** and away from others in your household by using a separate bedroom and bathroom if possible.
- Wear a mask around others, wash hands frequently, and clean commonly-used surfaces.
- Drink plenty of fluids like Pedialyte, Lytren, broth, or half-diluted sports drinks if unable to eat solid food.
- Stop self-isolating **ten days after onset of symptoms** and **one day with no fever and improved symptoms**. If you have no symptoms, 10 days of isolation after the positive test is sufficient.
- A **PCR test is no longer recommended** to discontinue isolation except in special circumstances and should not be repeated for three months after the first test unless you develop new symptoms of COVID-19.
- See: "How to Treat COVID-19 at Home" and the CDC website for more guidance.

To prevent the spread of infection to others, you will be contacted by your local health department or the Massachusetts Community Tracing Collaborative about notifying your close contacts anonymously so they can get tested. This is an excellent way to stop more people from getting COVID-19.