

## PCR Testing for SARS-CoV-2 (coronavirus)

<p><b>What is PCR test?</b></p>	<p>Polymerase chain reaction (PCR) tests are designed to detect genetic material from SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19. It is only possible to detect this material if the virus is present in the cells where a swab is taken (i.e. nose and/or throat) and someone is actively infected. This test detects <b>current</b> infections.</p> <p>A swab (PCR) test differs to an antibody test, which tests for evidence of <b>previous infection with</b> the virus.</p>
<p><b>How do I get tested?</b></p>	<p>The test works by taking a nose and throat swab, aiming to collect virus material from the upper airway.</p> <p>If you have symptoms, please call the coronavirus helpline on 01481 756938 or 01481 759969 as you may require a test for current SARS-CoV-2 infection. These tests are free of charge for those who have symptoms.</p> <p>Private testing is also available through your GP Practice.</p>
<p><b>What does a positive PCR test mean?</b></p>	<p>This means that at the time the sample was collected, SARS-CoV-2 genetic material was found in your airways, meaning you have a current active COVID-19 infection.</p> <p>In this case, you will be contacted by Public Health team and provided with clear instructions.</p> <p>Those with a positive test result pose an infection risk to other people. It is therefore vital that you remain in self-isolation until advised otherwise by Public Health.</p>
<p><b>What does a negative PCR test mean?</b></p>	<p>This means that at the time the sample was collected, SARS-CoV-2 genetic material was NOT found in your airways.</p> <p>However, you may still be incubating the virus at the time the swab was taken or be in contact with it at a later stage. It is therefore vital that you remain vigilant for any symptoms, however mild, and call the coronavirus helpline on 01481 756938 or 01481 759969 as you may require a further test. These tests are free of charge for those who have symptoms.</p>