



Madison County Health Department

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Regarding: Health Department COVID-19 updates

Dear Madison County residents, employers and friends:

With the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency in May 2023, there are new changes to funding for testing and vaccination. Supplies for these items are no longer being replenished by the government, so our small inventory of “free” tests and vaccines will soon be gone (on a first-come-first-serve basis). Therefore, COVID-19 will now be handled just like other illnesses such as flu and strep. We encourage you to see your PCP whenever possible, but when it’s not possible we are happy to take care of you. Tests are no longer performed without a provider visit. Vaccines are available with a nurse visit. We encourage appointments for both but will accept walk-ins if possible. We do accept insurance and offer sliding-scale for the uninsured including Covid vaccine for uninsured.

Home COVID-19 testing remains a viable and inexpensive option that will suit most needs. You may rely upon a positive test. Negative tests are trickier, as home tests may not be sensitive enough to pick up early cases.

If you have been exposed, you should wear a mask for 10 days *after* the day of exposure even if you have no symptoms. If you develop symptoms, test that day. If you remain symptom-free, test anyway on the 5th day *after* the day of exposure.

If you test positive for COVID-19:

- Isolate at home for 5 days *after* the day you tested positive or got symptoms, whichever came first
- Wear a mask for 5 more days
- There is no role for re-testing. Some employers have been requiring this, but we do not recommend it. This is because the 5-day isolation plus 5-day masking period is more reliable than re-testing. After the full 10-day period, you could still be shedding dead virus particles that might light up the test but would not likely cause infection.

Sincerely,

Melissa Robinson M.D.