



Wednesday, September 22, 2021

RE: Take-Home COVID-19 Testing

Dear Parents, Guardians, Students, and Staff,

Ottawa Public Health (OPH), together with our partners at CHEO, is offering free **take-home COVID-19 testing kits** for students and staff at your school who develop symptoms of COVID-19 or are identified as a high-risk contact. Getting tested is an important step to identify COVID-19 and help stop the spread of the virus in the school and in our community.

COVID-19 test kits will be available on-site at your school and can either be used at school or at home. Use of a test kit should be carefully planned to allow it to be returned the same day to your school (during school hours) or to the [Brewer Assessment Centre](#) (151 Brewer Way), during regular hours.

We hope that these test kits will make access to COVID-19 testing easier than going to an assessment centre if a student or staff develops COVID-19 symptoms or becomes a high-risk contact.

About the Take-Home COVID-19 Test Kits:

The take-home test kits include a combined mouth and nose swab that a child or adult can do themselves, or that can be done by a parent/guardian or caregiver. This test is less invasive and more comfortable than the usual COVID-19 test and takes only seconds to complete. The take-home test kits will include detailed instructions about how to do the test, how to fill out the form included in the kit, labelling and storing the test sample, and where to return it. Please note that student tests will **not** be performed or supervised by school staff.

To find out more about this test, you can watch a short video here:

[How to do a combined nose and mouth swab for COVID-19 - YouTube](#)

After You Have Completed the Test:

The take-home COVID-19 test kits will be available to students and staff who develop symptoms of COVID-19 or have been identified as a high-risk contact. Individuals with symptoms of COVID-19 can end self-isolation when one of the following criteria is met:

- A negative COVID-19 test result is received, the individual does not have a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications), and symptoms have improved for at least 24 hours (if a child's symptoms include vomiting or diarrhea, these symptoms must be resolved for 48 hours prior to returning to school); OR



- If you choose not to get tested, it has been 10 days since symptoms started, the individual does not have a fever (without the use of fever-reducing medications), and symptoms have improved for at least 24 hours (if a child's symptoms include vomiting or diarrhea, these symptoms must be resolved for 48 hours prior to returning to school);
OR
- An alternative diagnosis is provided by a health care provider and infectious symptoms have resolved, as above.

By completing the take-home test kit and dropping it off at the school, you are consenting to a COVID-19 test for you or your child. Your personal health information will be protected and only known to those at CHEO and Ottawa Public Health that need to know. Your participation is appreciated and will help reduce spread of COVID-19 in our community.

If you have any questions about this take-home COVID-19 testing opportunity, please call Ottawa Public Health at 613-580-6744.

Thank you,

Ottawa Public Health