

March 2020

## Coronavirus (COVID-19) testing now available

Dear valued client:

As the world leader in diagnostic information services, Quest Diagnostics is committed to fast action on emerging health threats for which laboratory testing can provide critical insights aiding response.

**Quest Diagnostics is now able to receive COVID-19 specimens and perform testing.** The Quest Diagnostics test for COVID-19 is now available nationally. Patients should be prioritized for testing of COVID-19 if they meet the CDC criteria, including those who may have been exposed to the virus or had contact with someone confirmed to have COVID-19, who show signs and symptoms (eg, fever, cough, difficulty breathing), or who live in or recently traveled to a place where transmission of COVID-19 is prevalent.

The new SARS-CoV-2 RNA, Qualitative Real-Time RT-PCR test aids the presumptive detection of nucleic acid in respiratory specimens of patients meeting the CDC's clinical criteria for COVID-19 testing. The test has not been FDA cleared or approved or authorized. The test has been validated according to CLIA, but FDA's independent review of this validation is pending.

To stay updated on who should be tested, providers should review the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website to guide their patient management. The CDC provides information on COVID-19 at: [CDC.gov/NCOV](https://www.cdc.gov/NCOV).

Quality lab testing from companies such as Quest Diagnostics is essential to supplement public health response during national health crises. Quest Diagnostics remains committed to providing healthcare providers with timely information, testing, and results that enable the best possible outcomes for patients and communities.

For additional information on COVID-19 testing, please visit [QuestDiagnostics.com/COVID19/HCP](https://www.questdiagnostics.com/COVID19/HCP); for questions, contact your Quest Diagnostics representative or call **1.866.MYQUEST**.

Sincerely,



Jay Wohl gemuth, MD  
Senior Vice President & Chief Medical Officer  
Quest Diagnostics

## Testing information

**Test name:** SARS-CoV-2 RNA, Qualitative Real-Time RT-PCR

**Test code:** 39433

Physicians may order the test using test code 39433. The test for COVID-19 must be ordered on a separate requisition from other tests.

**Test turnaround time:** Test results are typically available 3-4 days from the time of specimen pick-up, and may be impacted by high demand.

## Facilities that can collect COVID-19 specimens

Specimens are to be collected by hospitals, physician offices, and clinics. Quest Diagnostics Patient Service Centers and Quest's in-office phlebotomists do not collect respiratory specimens, including those from patients suspected of having COVID-19.

## Specimen collection

- Currently, nasopharyngeal (NP) or oropharyngeal (OP) swab testing is being performed. Lower respiratory specimen tests, including bronchial lavage/wash, nasopharyngeal aspirate/wash, or sputum/tracheal aspirate samples can also be ordered but will be frozen upon receipt, with testing commencing on 3/16/2020.
- One test for COVID-19 will be performed per swab.
- Upper respiratory samples should be collected using 1 nasopharyngeal swab in M4, VCM, or UTM media or 1 oropharyngeal swab in another M4, VCM, or UTM media. Only sterile Dacron® or Rayon swabs should be used. Do not use calcium alginate swabs as they may contain substances that inhibit PCR testing. Wooden shaft swabs should also not be used.

## COVID-19 specimen storage and transport

Samples should be shipped frozen (preferred). However, samples can be shipped refrigerated at 2 °C–8 °C, and are stable at this temperature for 72 hours. Cold packs/pouches must be used if placing specimens in a lockbox for courier pick-up. Specimens should be shipped overnight to your local Quest Diagnostics accessioning laboratory according to standard operating procedures. The SARS-CoV-2 RNA, Qualitative Real-Time RT-PCR test is not a STAT test and STAT pick-up cannot be ordered.

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For questions, contact your Quest Diagnostics representative or call **1.866.MYQUEST** (1.866.697.8378).