
The Unified Health Command testing guidance for COVID-19 is as follows:

- Testing for COVID-19 is recommended for the following patients that have COVID-19 symptoms (new cough, new shortness of breath, subjective or measured fever ≥ 100.0, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea). To ensure that tests for the highest risk patients are processed first, please mark the following categories below as high risk when sending in your testing order:
  - Healthcare workers
  - Patients in other public safety occupations (e.g., law enforcement, fire fighter, EMS)
  - Patients involved in an illness cluster in a facility or institution (e.g., healthcare, corrections, homeless/shelters, long-term care facilities (LTCF), assisted living or group homes)
  - Close contacts of a confirmed case
  - Older adults (age ≥ 60 years)
  - Patients with underlying medical conditions:
    - Immunocompromised individuals
    - Cancer
    - Solid organ transplant
    - Other immunosuppressive drugs
    - Chronic lung, kidney, heart disease
    - Hemodialysis
    - Diabetes
    - Other chronic medical conditions

- Please note: Turnaround time for test results may vary depending on prioritization of testing and laboratory capacity. Instruct the patient utilizing the guidance developed by the Unified Health Command “Stay Home While Waiting For Your COVID-19 Test Results” and “What Does Being Tested for COVID-19 Mean to My Household Members?”

- Persons without symptoms who are prioritized by health departments or clinicians, including but not limited to: public health monitoring, sentinel surveillance, or screening of other asymptomatic individuals in certain circumstances as necessary.
Clinically diagnosed patients who do not get tested for COVID-19 need to be reported to RiverStone Health, Yellowstone County’s public health department. Instruct clinically diagnosed patients to follow the same guidance as patients with a lab confirmed COVID-19 case. Report clinically diagnosed patients to RiverStone Health by calling 406.247.3200 and ask for public health.

The most current specimen collection guidance can be found at the following link: https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/lab/guidelines-clinical-specimens.html

Note: A negative test result does not rule out an infection.