



# Lateral Flow Testing

## Parent Information

## **INTRODUCTION**

1 in 3 people with Coronavirus (COVID-19) do not have any symptoms, but they are still able to give the virus to other people.

If you do not have symptoms of COVID-19 then you are able to get a test kit to use at home. The test for people without COVID-19 symptoms is called a lateral flow test. A lateral flow test gives you your result within 30 minutes.

The East Midlands Neonatal Operational Delivery Network are asking you, the parents and carers of neonatal patients, to do a lateral flow test twice a week (every 3 to 4 days) to check if you have the virus.

This leaflet answers some of the common questions we are asked about lateral flow testing.

## **WHY SHOULD I DO LATERAL FLOW TESTING?**

The safety of you, your families and our staff is very important to us. Although lots of people have now had a COVID-19 vaccination, there are still many people who have not and we need to keep everybody protected as much as possible. Regular testing for people who do not have symptoms has been proven to do this, because if people test positive and then self-isolate, it helps stop the virus spreading.

## **HOW CAN PARENTS ACCESS LATERAL FLOW TESTS?**

Some of the hospitals within the East Midlands are able to provide you with test kits, please check with the nursing team whether this happens on your unit.

Because the test kits are free of charge and easy to order to your home address, many hospitals do not provide the test kits. If this is the case on your unit you can get tests in the following ways:

\*ORDER TESTS ONLINE – you can get a pack of 7 lateral flow tests sent to your home on:

[www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests](http://www.gov.uk/order-coronavirus-rapid-lateral-flow-tests)

\*COLLECT TESTS TO DO AT HOME – you can pick up a maximum of 2 packs of 7 lateral flow tests from a local pharmacy or test site. You can find the nearest place for you to do this on:

[maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk](http://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk)

\*GO TO A TEST SITE – you can get tested at a lateral flow test site. If you want to go to a test site you may need an appointment, so check before you go. A trained helper might be able to help you do the test. You can find lateral flow test sites on:

[maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk](http://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk)

## **WHAT DOES LATERAL FLOW TEST INVOLVE?**

A lateral flow test normally involves rubbing a long cotton bud (swab) over your tonsils (or where they would have been) and inside your nose. This does not hurt, but might feel a little uncomfortable for some people. The whole testing process can take less than 2 minutes. It will then take 30 minutes to show your result.

## **HOW DO I RECORD THE RESULTS?**

If you test at home, you'll need to report your results online or on the phone. Instructions on how to do this will be in your test kit and more information can be found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk)

If you visit a site for your tests, you will get a text or email with the result when it is ready.

Please also check with your neonatal unit if and how they would like to see your results.

## **WHEN SHOULD PARENTS TEST?**

The national advice from the Government, NHS England and Public Health England is to test twice a week leaving 3 to 4 days between tests. Please check with your neonatal unit whether they have chosen set days to ask parents and carers to test on. Some units may also do routine PCR testing for parents- you can ask a member of the neonatal team about this. If your baby is being transferred to another unit and you are able to travel with them in the ambulance, you will need to provide a negative lateral flow test result to the transport team before you are able to travel.

## **DO PARENTS NEED TO WAIT FOR RESULTS BEFORE VISITING?**

As long as you do not have any symptoms of COVID-19 then you do not need to wait for any test results before visiting your baby.

## **ARE STAFF BEING TESTED TOO?**

Yes, staff are requested to also test themselves twice per week.

## **WHAT IF I TEST POSITIVE?**

It is essential that we protect the babies, families, and staff on the Neonatal unit. If either parent tests positive you will be advised to request a PCR test via the Government website and will be asked to go home and self-isolate whilst you await the PCR test result in accordance with current Government guidance.

## **WHAT IF I TEST NEGATIVE?**

If your result is negative, you can continue to access the neonatal unit as normal and are advised to repeat the lateral flow testing twice a week.

## **SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19**

The main symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- A high temperature.
- A new, continuous cough.
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

*Any new and unexplained symptoms should be discussed with a member of nursing/medical staff.*

## **WHAT IF I DEVELOP SYMPTOMS?**

If you develop COVID-19 symptoms you will be advised to self-isolate at home and request a PCR test from the Government website. If you have COVID-19 symptoms you should not access the neonatal unit until you have a negative test result.

## **TOP TIPS FOR STAYING COVID SAFE**

- Wear a face mask in public places, cover your mouth and your nose.
- Maintain 2 metre distance from people who are not from your household.
- Wash your hands regularly.
- Use hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Have your vaccine once it is available to you.
- Avoid crowds and poorly ventilated spaces.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces regularly.
- Monitor your health daily- be alert for symptoms.

**Please note that some hospitals may have chosen to test parents and carers using a different kind of test, called a PCR. This method is very similar to the lateral flow test but the time for results and how you get your results may vary slightly. The reasons for testing and how often you should test stay the same.**



This information leaflet was designed and produced by the East Midlands Neonatal Operational Delivery Network.

For further information on what we do, please visit our website; [www.emnodn.nhs.uk](http://www.emnodn.nhs.uk)