Testing Flow Chart
How do I get tested for COVID-19?

1. Call your provider. Your provider will help you determine if you meet criteria.

2. Your provider and Public Health will coordinate collecting your specimen and sending it to a Public Health Lab.

3. Do you meet criteria for public health testing?
   - YES: Your provider and Public Health will coordinate collecting your specimen and sending it to a Public Health Lab.
   - NO: There is no testing available for asymptomatic people at this time. Stay home when possible and practice social distancing.

4. Are you symptomatic?
   - YES: You must be tested through a commercial lab. Only a provider can order this test. Without a provider ordering the test, there is no testing available in the community at this time.
   - NO: Go home and self-isolate. Do not leave your home until you have heard the result of your test. Try to stay away from other members of your household, to keep them safe.

FAQs:

Why can’t my provider test?
There are many reasons. Your provider might not have a contract with a lab that has COVID-19 testing. Testing requires special, advanced protective gear that many providers don’t have.

Can I go straight to a lab?
No. Commercial labs are not collecting the specimen for the COVID-19 test. It requires a nasal swab, not blood.

Can I go straight to the Emergency Room?
Only if you are experiencing a life-threatening or severe illness. The ER is not accepting patients only for testing at this time.

Can I be tested at Public Health?
Not at this time. The Health Department doesn’t have the right providers to collect specimen.

We know it is frustrating that not everyone who wants to be tested can be tested at this time. It’s frustrating for us, too. There has been a state- and nation-wide shortage of tests. As testing has expanded to commercial labs, we are actively working with providers to increase testing ability so more and more residents can be tested, across Merced County.

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