

Test to Protect Kids

Expansion of rapid home COVID-19 tests for school-aged children

3 December 2021

Dear families,

Earlier this school year we introduced a take-home testing pilot program for families with children under the age of 12 in Nova Scotia's public schools. We've heard from many families who took part in the pilot program and have decided to expand the program and offer each family an additional two tests per child under the age of 12.

The package will be distributed in the coming weeks and will contain two (2) take-home COVID-19 tests (with instructions), which can be used at home to test people age 3 and older with mild COVID-19 symptoms.

The COVID-19 PCR tests available at a Nova Scotia Health testing site are the most accurate test for COVID-19. However, the take-home tests are a good option if:

- it is difficult for your family to get to a COVID-19 testing site and your child has symptoms of COVID-19
- your child only has one mild symptom and doesn't need a lab-based PCR test (the kind you would receive at a Nova Scotia Health testing site)
- you have reviewed the instructions and feel comfortable doing a shallow nose swab on your child

The flow chart below will help you determine when to use an at-home test and when to stay home. Please read this carefully before using a test and follow the instructions included with the kit. The information contained in this memo, as well as the take-home testing kit instructions, can be found online at <https://backtoschool.ednet.ns.ca/kidcovidtest>.

The take-home tests are not the best option if:

- it is easy for your family to go to a Nova Scotia Health testing site
- you don't feel comfortable doing the shallow nose swab on your child
- you think your child is sick and should be seen by a health care provider

The test is not recommended if you are a close contact of someone with COVID-19. If you are identified as a close contact, please follow public health direction on testing and isolation.

If the take-home test is negative, it must be repeated after 48 hours. If the take-home test is positive, your child must get a confirmation PCR test. A PCR test can be booked at <https://covid-self-assessment.novascotia.ca/en> or by calling 811.

Thank you for your ongoing commitment to keeping our schools safe and healthy.

NOTE:

The test kits have a printed expiry date. The expiry date has been extended 10 months beyond the original expiry date printed on the package of the test.

For example, if the test expiry date reads May 2021, the new expiry date which has been approved by

Health Canada is March 2022.

We want to know what you think of home testing! Please answer a couple of questions here -

<https://testtoprotect.ca/kids>.