

# COVID FAQ

January 8, 2022

**We are in a Surge:** The current positivity rate in Colorado is 27%

**Masks, avoiding crowds, physical distancing and testing still work to prevent omicron transmission.**

If you are going to be around other people inside who are not from your household, particularly if some of those people might be unvaccinated or the group is a large one, wear a proper fitting mask over your mouth and nose.

**Testing:** If you are going to gather in a group or travel, it's a good idea to get tested at a testing site. PCR test are the most accurate to see if you HAVE Covid. However, they're very sensitive and can register even small amounts of the virus in your system. The Antigen test, whether at-home or a rapid test, versions aren't perfect, but they do a pretty good job of detecting infectious cases. If you test positive, you need to stay away from others and slow transmission.

<https://thewell.unc.edu/2022/01/06/3-facts-about-the-omicron-surge/>

- **What about testing before an event?**

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) urges self-testing before joining indoor gatherings with others who are not in your household.

A positive self-test result means that you have an infection and should avoid indoor gatherings to reduce the risk of spreading the disease. A negative self-test result means that you may not have an infection. Repeating the test with at least 24 hours between tests “will increase the confidence that you are not infected.”

For example, if you're using a self-test, test 48 hours before you plan to attend (or depart), wait 24 hours, and test a second time.

If someone in your group tests positive, you should self-test at least three days after the initial contact with the person who tested positive.

- **Can I wait and test at the venue?**

You will want to test before you leave for the event because, if you test positive, you will want to stay home and quarantine or isolate. See above.

- **What is the fastest way to get tested?**

COVID-19 self-tests – also known as at-home tests – is a risk-reduction measure that can protect you and others by reducing the chances of spreading COVID, according to the CDC. These tests

can be taken at home or anywhere, regardless of vaccination status or whether you have symptoms, and are easy to use for quick results. They are available widely at major retail pharmacies. (See [state\\_covid\\_testing](#) handout.)

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention currently accepts three major at-home tests for use by inbound airline passengers: [Abbott's BinaxNow](#) COVID-19 Home Test, [Ellume's](#) COVID-19 Home Test and [Qured's](#) video-supervised rapid antigen test.

- **What is a proctored test?**

Officially, a proctored test is a test that is observed and validated by “an employer or medically trained health professional.” [US Department of Labor, OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard, Paragraph (g)] For our purposes, we just want to make sure we can affirm that attendees are tested. So, if someone other than yourself observes and validates, that is acceptable.

- **We need to mask at the event. What masks offer the best protection?**

According to CDC, Mayo Clinic, and other health professionals, use masks that are medical grade, such as surgical (or blue), or an N95, KN95 or KF94 masks. Placing a cloth mask on top of a surgical one can be more effective than a surgical mask alone as it tightens the fit.

What's best are two layers of tightly woven cotton with a third layer of nonwoven fabric. The third layer could be an inserted mask filter or a synthetic fabric such as polypropylene. Ideally, you want a mask with nose wires to reduce gaps around the nose and adjustable ear loops or straps that go around the head to reduce gaps around the face.

- **What masks are not good protection?**

Wearing an old, loose, cloth mask alone is not effective; nor are gaiters, bandanas or acrylic/plastic face shields. These are insufficient to stop the microscopic COVID aerosols. In

fact, the Mayo Clinic will give a patient or visitor a medical-grade mask to wear over a bandana-type mask.

- **Where else can I find information on omicron, testing and other precautions?**

For the most current information, the best site is CDC. Visit your state health department website, (See the State\_Covid\_Testing attachment.) You may also find good information at the Mayo Clinic site, and your local hospital, city and/or county websites.

CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/omicron-variant.html>

Mayo Clinic: <https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/featured-topic/omicron-transmissibility-and-virulence>